

VIDEO AGE

international

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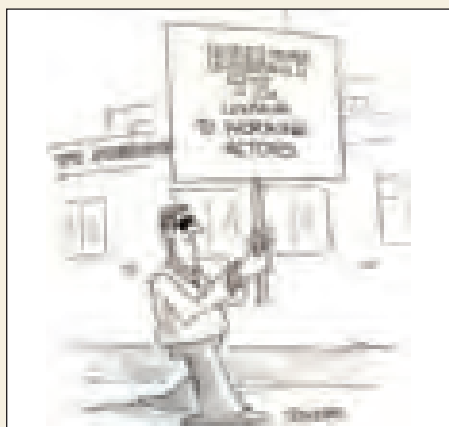
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Hollywood Writers Want To Strike Digital Riches

While Europe recently had to deal with strikes by railroad workers, taxi drivers and even bread makers, this past holiday season, striking workers in the U.S. hit consumers where it hurt most: the entertainment industry. The dearth of holiday cheer was due to a strike by the Writers Guild of America (WGA), the film and television writers' union responsible for the majority of primetime programming in the U.S., which halted the writing of new episodes on November 5, 2007. Immediately, WGA members in its two key centers — Guild East, based in New York with 3,770 members and Guild West in Los Angeles with 7,627 members — started picketing studios (including FremantleMedia in Burbank).

The union initiated a strike after reaching a stalemate in contract negotiations with the representative body

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NATPE Quo Vadis? Does the TV Industry Still Want You?

BY LEAH HOCHBAUM ROSNER

In the weeks leading up to the 45th annual National Association of Television Program Executives (NATPE) event, which will take place January 28-31, 2008 at the Mandalay Bay Resort in

Las Vegas, Nevada, the major studios have waffled as to whether or not to attend, a large contingent of attendees have abandoned the floor in favor of the suites, and some people feel that making the trip out to Vegas is becoming a waste of time. Others, however, still view NATPE as relevant to their businesses. *VideoAge* checked in with a

who's who of international TV executives to find out the real story.

"Even though we're a well-known company, I wouldn't pretend that the whole world knows about us," said John

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Measuring Audience Breaks During Commercial Breaks

Despite all the social networks and file-sharing websites out there, people are watching more TV than ever. The average U.S. household, for example, watches eight hours and 14 minutes per day. This takes into account the fact that there are multiple TVs in most homes — 2.8 TVs per household to just 2.5 people per household, on average. But are they watching commercials?

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Latin America's New Broadband Challenges

BY MARINA DEL RIVERO

Like most other regions, South America is going through a complex period of change. The development of broadband has ushered in a new era and, with it, many questions: What are the main problems facing the entertainment industry in South America today? How will broadcasters overcome obstacles? And what role will Triple Play play?

These and other issues are the subjects of this regional review.

Argentina: Laws & Strikes

Argentina has a law that prevents Telcos from transmitting live television programs. This has delayed the development of broadband television, and slowed the influx of new investments.

Despite this, "Cable TV will bring Internet access to a wide group of people," said Walter Burzaco, president of Argentina's Asociación de Televisión por Cable (ATVC).

(Continued on Page 38)

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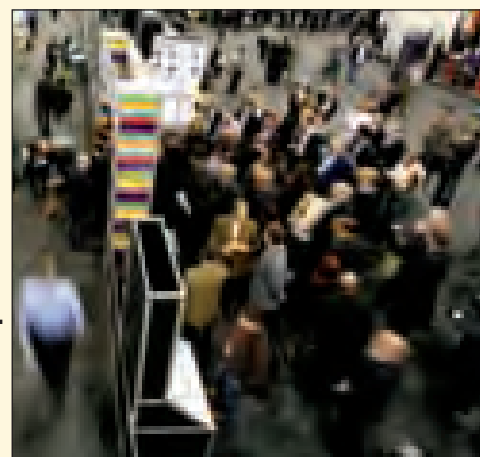
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Weather Channel Forecasts its Sale

A \$5 billion sale is in the forecast for Landmark Communications, after putting its popular U.S. cable channel, The Weather Channel, on the market early this month. Prospective buyers will get a chance to bid on the channel (valued at \$1.5 billion) — along with its website, weather.com (\$3.5 billion) — due to the

break-up of Landmark, a Norfolk, Virginia-based media company. The company's holdings are expected to be split into three parts: TV (which includes distribution company Dominion Enterprises and two TV stations), print and the Weather Channel. The Batten family, Landmark's primary owner, declined to comment on the reason behind the break-up. Frank Batten Jr., is chairman and CEO of the group that his father, Frank Sr., founded in 1954 and which today generates \$1 billion in

annual revenues.

The Weather Channel's 10-figure price tag is dictated by its ability to attract advertisers, and reflects the increasing value of cable assets. Its moment-to-moment coverage is a big draw to advertisers, as viewers have no incentive to record its programs and replay them later while skipping commercials. Heavy-traffic weather.com, which grabs more than 34 million unique visitors a month, sweetens the deal with advertising potential of its own.

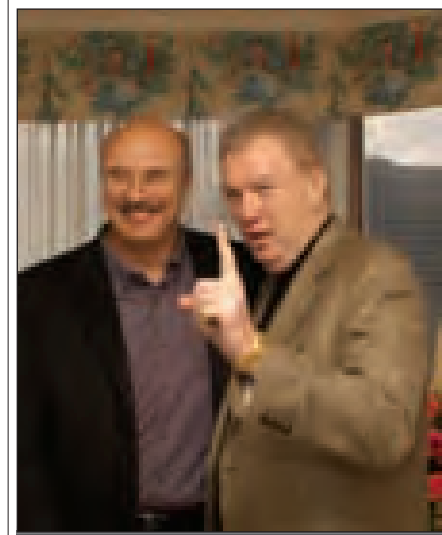
The Weather Channel, which was founded in 1982, has also gained recognition, lately, for its emphasis on controversial environmental and climate issues. Companies like NBC, News Corp and Comcast Corp have already expressed interest. JPMorgan Chase will advise Landmark on the sale.

Roger King Dies at 63

Roger King, CEO of CBS Television Distribution and chairman of the King World television dynasty, passed away in early December. King, 63, suffered a stroke at his home in Boca Raton, Florida on Friday morning, December 7, and died on Saturday at Boca Raton Community Hospital.

King was one of the most successful executives in the history of U.S. television, transforming his family business, King World, into a production and syndication empire. Under King's tutelage, King World became the industry's leading U.S. distributor of first-run syndicated programming, including such shows as *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *Jeopardy!* and *Dr. Phil*. In addition, King was instrumental in launching the long-running syndicated news magazine *Inside Edition*.

He is survived by his wife, Raemali, and his three daughters, Kellie, Anna Rose and Lucinda.



Roger King with Dr. Phil

China Bans U.S. Films

Recently, China's government has been blocking U.S. movies from its cinemas. Even though Chinese government officials have not announced a policy change, U.S. studios have stopped receiving approvals to show films in China.

Insiders speculate that the move is most likely China's way of protecting its domestic film industry, but they also cautioned that it might be a retaliatory measure against Washington's increasingly forceful actions to push Beijing to do more to stop the massive counterfeiting of movies, music and books in China. In 2007, the Bush administration filed two complaints with the World Trade Organization — moves that were denounced by Chinese officials.

However, according to other accounts, the country routinely restricts foreign movies during holidays — times when

(Continued on Page 4)

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(Continued from Page 2)

students flock to movie theaters — in an effort to promote local films. Chinese officials have been quoted as saying they want domestic film companies to make up at least 50 percent of China's box-office receipts. In the first half of 2007, revenue for foreign films was \$100 million, with domestic films taking in just \$40 million.

Media analysts predict that this impromptu ban won't really boost domestic box office since U.S. blockbusters bring in audiences,

ultimately helping Chinese filmmakers. The U.S. studios' organization and lobby, the Motion Picture Association of America, has vowed to combat the situation as best as they can.

India Faces TV Regulations

India's Supreme Court ruled in favor of expanding the government's regulatory power over TV early this month. The decision will allow the government-established Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to monitor broadcasting and cable services, with special emphasis on fees charged for certain channels.

The verdict came in spite of a petition by entertainment company Star India —

partly owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp — which claimed the new stipulation doesn't fall under TRAI's jurisdiction. As India's largest privately owned entertainment company, Star India stands to lose substantial revenue from the initiative. Star India's senior advocate Fali Nariman asserted to the Court that the new powers granted to TRAI are illegal because they are not outlined in the original act that established TRAI.

Founded in 1997, TRAI serves primarily to police service provider licensing and facilitate technological advancement in telecommunications. Although there was much outcry from private companies, led by Star India, the court ordered that TRAI regulate the broadcasting sector until the government passes a Broadcasting Act to specify otherwise.

Canada Against Foreign Takeovers

In the wake of a number of foreign takeovers of Canadian companies in the broadcasting industry and beyond, Canada has made it known that it plans to investigate foreign state-owned companies looking to take over Canadian firms, and it won't condone acquisitions that turn companies into marionettes of offshore puppet masters.

The Canadian government hopes to send a message that while Canada welcomes outside investment, it won't accept acquisitions made for anything other than commercial reasons. In the future, government officials say they plan to examine prospective buyers to determine the extent to which foreign governments control them and whether Canadian firms will lose a commercial focus if overtaken by outsiders.

Canada is not introducing any official rules as to how it will go about this, and assures that the vast majority of state-owned enterprises don't raise any red flags. However, the government will examine to what extent bidders adhere to Canadian corporate governance standards.

The new measure was triggered by Beijing's desire for global acquisition. But officials have made it clear that they will pay equal attention to state-owned takeover attempts from Saudi Arabia, Iran, Russia and Venezuela.

Internet To Serve U.S. Air Passengers

Research In Motion Inc. has joined forces with JetBlue Airways Corp. and Yahoo! Inc. to deliver free in-flight Internet services to certain flights. Beginning in early December, a JetBlue A320 plane, dubbed BetaBlue, was equipped with the ability for passengers to connect to Yahoo's e-mail and Instant Messaging services using Wi-Fi enabled laptops and RIM's BlackBerries for e-mail and messaging. As of now, RIM's BlackBerry 8820 and Blackberry Curve 8320 models are the only devices that the airplane will support.

The service will be operated using technology from Florida-based Live TV, which installs satellite TV hardware on airlines, including JetBlue. The Wi-Fi will be turned on when the aircraft reaches 3,000 meters in altitude.

The inaugural BetaBlue flight, JetBlue Flight 641, flew from New York's Kennedy Airport bound for San Francisco in early December. The company plans to test BetaBlue's service for a few months to monitor passenger response. If successful, it plans to include the service on all of its planes.

Dubai-based Emirates and Singapore Airlines already equip their fleets with Internet-ready connections, but JetBlue will be the first in North America to provide the service.

(Continued on Page 6)

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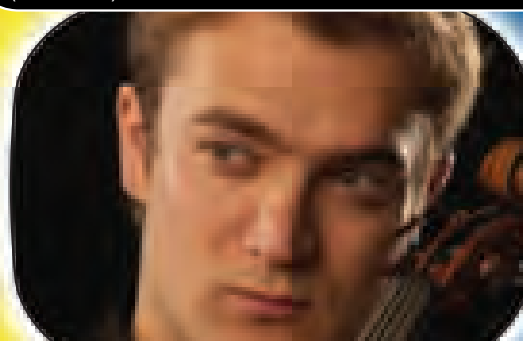
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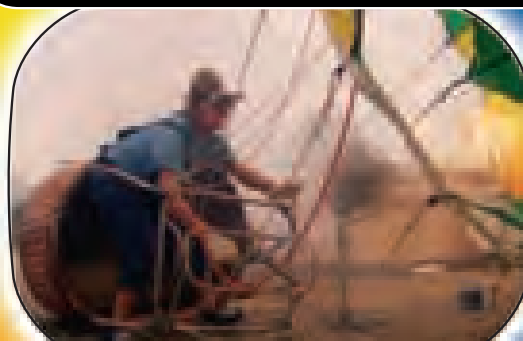
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GRANADA
International



(Continued from Page 4)

U.S. Extends TV's Analog Transition

The U.S. switch from analog to digital television got a little easier for some broadcast stations, when the regulatory agency, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), approved new rules this month. The new regulations were enacted to help ease the transition towards the February 17, 2009

deadline, at which time all broadcasting in the U.S. will be exclusively digital. Under the revised rules, broadcasters will be permitted to make a phased transition into digital (rather than forced to make an abrupt change at the deadline) and phase-out their analog service gradually. The FCC said the aim of the new regulations is to minimize disruptions and "dead air" come 2009.

In addition, to lighten the financial burden of purchasing a digital television, the government will provide \$40 coupons to those with analog sets. Congress created the deadline in 2005 in order to streamline TV into one transmission medium and to open up public airwaves for the use of firefighters and the police. Despite recent FCC attempts at smoothing the transition, many believe that the change to digital will be a rocky one.

The IOC Doesn't Get An IOU from Japan

Tokyo officials received a warning from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), after making inappropriate comments to Brazilian Olympic chief Carlos Arthur Nuzman. Leaders of Tokyo, one of the seven hopefuls for the bid for the 2016 Summer Olympics, questioned the motives behind Rio de Janeiro's decision to compete for the games, in light of the fact that it will host the 2014 World Cup.

The comments, issued by a Japanese diplomat, were ruled by the IOC to be in violation of the bidding rules, and Japan was given a slap on the wrist. The IOC is showing its stricter side in an attempt to root out the corruption that has marred the bidding process in years past. They

are cracking down on bidder conduct since the controversy surrounding the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Games, when a number of IOC officials were forced to resign for accepting bribes. The Tokyo leaders took the reprimand in stride, commenting that they did not consider their remarks socially unacceptable and that their Olympic bid will proceed according to plan.

In effect, the Japanese Olympic leaders do not feel that they owe anything to the IOC.

Has Sundance Sold Out?

Sundance Film Festival has been under the microscope for its commercialization in recent years. London paper *The Observer* ran an article in early January examining the vastly increased studio presence at the traditionally indie event and questioning whether the festival has "lost its soul." The festival, which was founded in 1978 by a film graduate named Sterling Van Wagenen, has met with criticism for eschewing its earnest routes and becoming instead a playground for the stars.

Sundance, held in Park City Utah, this year on Jan.17-27, began as a humble celebration of classic American films and a competition for movies made outside the Hollywood system. Robert Redford, the husband of Van Wagenen's cousin, signed on early to help the struggling festival find its stride. Over the years Sundance provided unknown filmmakers with funding and helped them gain recognition. But as the festival gained momentum, discovering directors like Quentin Tarantino and Steven Soderbergh, Hollywood began seeping in.

Today the festival's 52,000 attendees make up a who's who of A-list celebrities, party-hopping and snagging gift-bag give-aways (called swag). Although festival officials insist that the emphasis of Sundance is still on helping the little guy, *The Observer* and other critics can't help but be skeptical about the commercial tenor set by the omnipresence of studios and sponsors.

Famous Quotes

"I think I'd like to leave."

Why?

"I'd like to spend a little time being a wife, a mother and a grandmother."

And what will you do the rest of the day?

The late Roger King to one of his assistants, as told by *Inside Edition's* Deborah Norville at King's eulogy.

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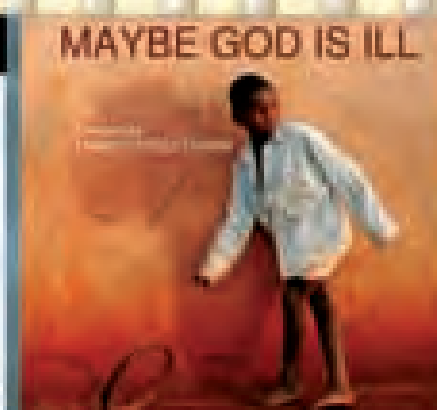
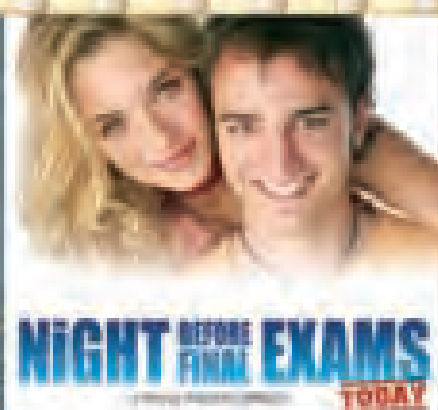
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European Film Market

Valenti's Life Written As a PG Movie

The Motion Picture Association of America's (MPAA) film ratings system was bitterly opposed by the industry from its conception. Instituted in 1968, the system raised heated controversy concerning censorship and morality. For Jack Valenti, the man behind this initiative and the author of autobiographical **This Time, This Place: My Life in War, the White House, and Hollywood** (2007, Harmony Books, 468 pages, U.S., \$25.95), MPAA battles were the only apparent conflicts in a life otherwise marked by unhindered, banal success. *This Time, This Place* was completed just a few months before Valenti's death in April 2007. He did not live to see it published.

Valenti, chairman and CEO of the MPAA, describes the ratings system as both his pet project and an albatross around his neck. But the ratings clash, which holds great dramatic potential, falls flat as told by Valenti. In fact, the entire memoir, defined in the preface as "a collection of memories of triumphs and tumult, tragedies and adventures," seems to be lacking in three out of four of those theatrical modifiers. Triumph abounds, but tragedy, despite a lengthy portion devoted to the author's service in World War II, is missing in action.

Born in 1921 to lower middle class first generation Italian-Americans in Houston, Texas, Valenti's beginnings were the stuff of American folklore. Though his family was poor, his childhood reads like a scene out of a Mark Twain novel: "We children seldom wore shoes when we played together, so the soles of our feet began to take on the attributes of leather. We walked to Davy Crockett Elementary School about seven blocks away."

A doting mother, a stern but kind father, and a chorus of boisterous relatives raised Valenti. The already poverty-stricken family was unaffected by the Depression, and though Valenti had to work from a young age, his early years are nevertheless described as bucolic.

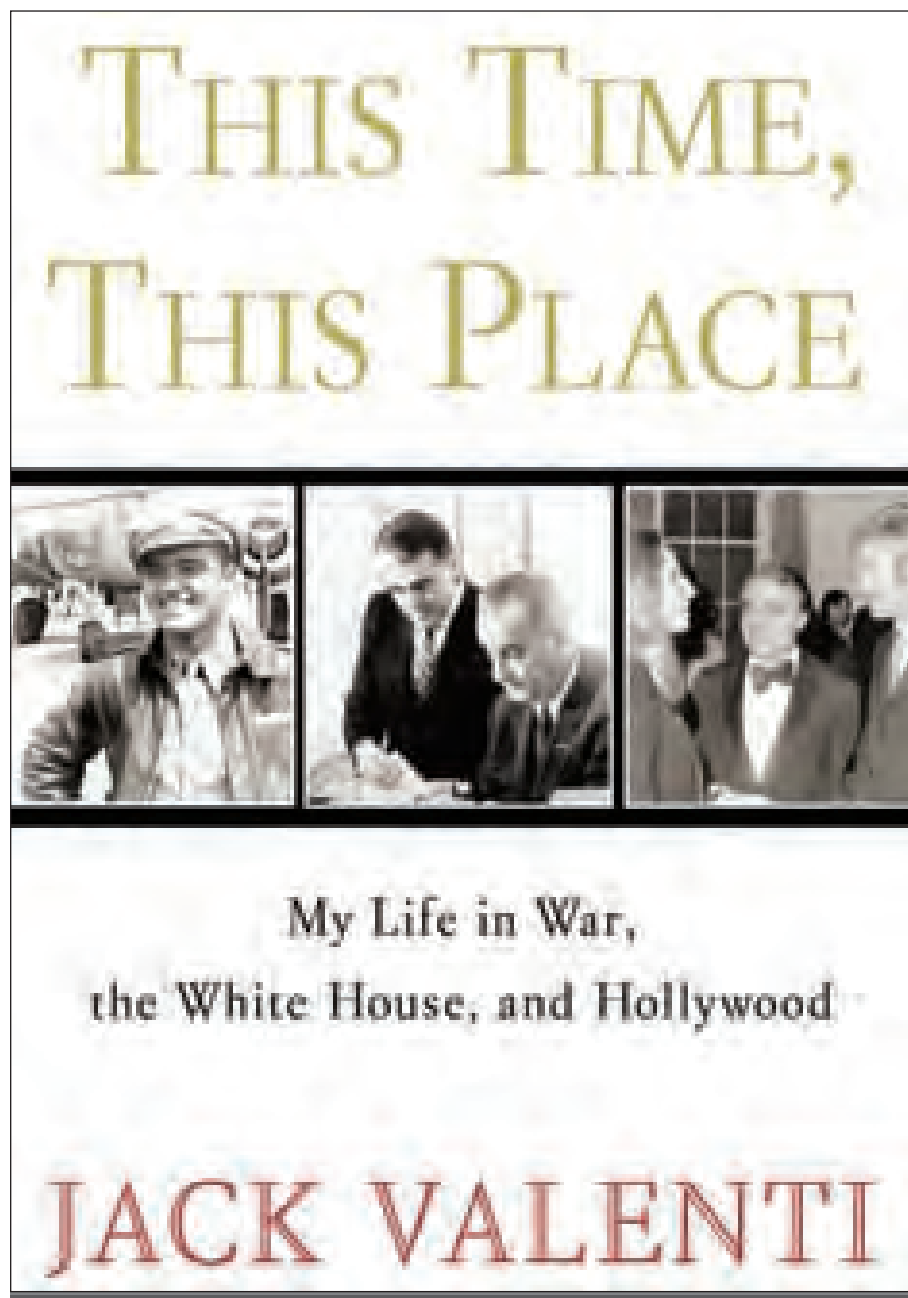
Valenti's first job was taking tickets at a movie theater, a detail that nicely foreshadows his future career, and from there he went on to work at Humble Oil Company and attend night school at the University of Houston. When the U.S. entered World War II, Valenti was quick to drop out of school and enlist as a fighter pilot. He emerged miraculously unscathed from his many missions. But while he describes his combat experience

as rife with "belly-spilling, throat-grabbing fear," his incredibly optimistic tone paints the war as less a visceral experience than a minor annoyance.

After obtaining a long sought-after MBA at Harvard, Valenti had successful careers in advertising, politics, and the film industry. The book's strongest anecdote recalls November 22, 1963, the day of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Valenti was present in Dallas and also witnessed the subsequent swearing in of President

liberally spotted with her husband's blood as well as fragments of his brain matter that had sprayed her when the assassin's bullet struck, but she had refused to change into another garment." Unfortunately, in the kind of metaphor that routinely undermines the better passages of the book, Valenti refers to the Dallas event as "The Longest Day," a moniker usually reserved for the 1944 invasion of Normandy.

Valenti was appointed as head of the



Lyndon Johnson on Air Force One. His gritty description of Jacqueline Kennedy is one of the book's rare powerful moments, if lacking in originality: "I saw her emerge slowly from the rear of the plane, walking as if in a trance. Her pink blouse was

MPAA in 1966, after serving for three years as a special assistant to President Johnson. The chairmanship of the MPAA was historically a lobbyist position, created to act out the desires of the studio heads, but it was clear from the beginning that

Valenti had an agenda of his own. Prior to his appointment, the Association endorsed the Hayes Code of the 1930s, which called for the censorship of all films that, in their view, possessed traces of vulgarity, anti-Americanism or immorality. To his credit, Valenti wasted no time abolishing the flagrantly unconstitutional Code. However, critics saw his freshly minted movie ratings system as a lateral move, rather than a solution. Valenti glosses over the dispute, dismissing some of the major studios as "particularly edgy," summarizing more than a year of negotiations in a single paragraph, and missing an opportunity to offer insight into the political machinations of Hollywood heavyweights.

In 2003, towards the end of his 38-year tenure at the MPAA, Valenti again faced industry opposition. When the studios found that they were losing revenue to piracy, the MPAA determined that screener copies (copies of films sent to a variety of people prior to release, including members of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences) were at the root of the problem and barred the practice. For major studios with reliable distribution, the proposal, known as the Screener Ban Injunction, posed few problems. But for indie production companies, who sent out screeners to a variety of distributors in the hopes of being picked up, the Screener Ban would be a fatal blow. For once Valenti positions himself and his MPAA colleagues as the bad guys, and admits that the Screener Ban was an imprudent step that in time "would haunt him." The indie production companies fought the MPAA with chutzpah, in an industry battle that came out in the little guy's favor.

Aside from the screener incident, the better part of Valenti's account of his time at the MPAA is spent gushing about high-profile friends. The chapter on Hollywood is comprised of sections, each devoted to his relationship with a mythically famous movie star. Marlon Brando and Katherine Hepburn merit their own sections, though he met them once and twice respectively, and Kirk Douglas, a close friend of Valenti's, is omnipresent. Few and far between are the charming insider anecdotes that one would expect of a man so well acquainted with Hollywood's power players. The LBJ-era politician seems alive and well in these tales, where tact and diplomacy win out over humor and intrigue. To expect a book about Hollywood not to name drop is to be naïve, but passages that go into baroque detail about the seating arrangements at parties read more like laundry lists than juicy gossip. "Mary Margaret sat between Cary Grant and Gene Kelly, I sat between Angie Dickinson and Dinah Shore. Also at the table were Fred Astaire, Kirk and Anne Douglas, Burt Lancaster, Julie Andrews, and Barbara Stanwyck."

Perhaps the moment of authorship, so late in Valenti's illustrious life, provides explanation for the book's shortcomings. Jack Valenti's accomplishments in politics and Hollywood were vast and he had much for which to be grateful. *This Time, This Place* is a thank you letter to those who helped and inspired him, with all the hardship omitted. It is an old man's recollection of life as he wanted to be remembered. **ES** ●

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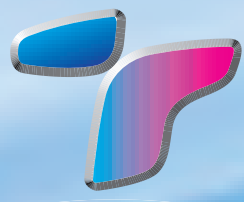
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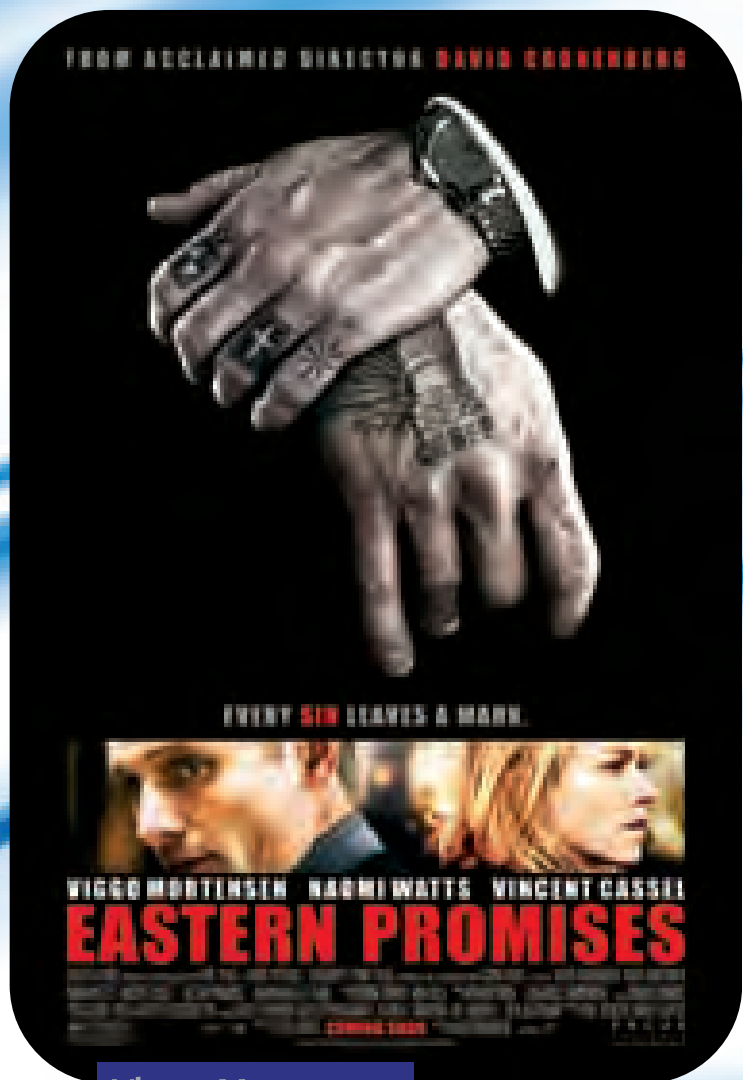
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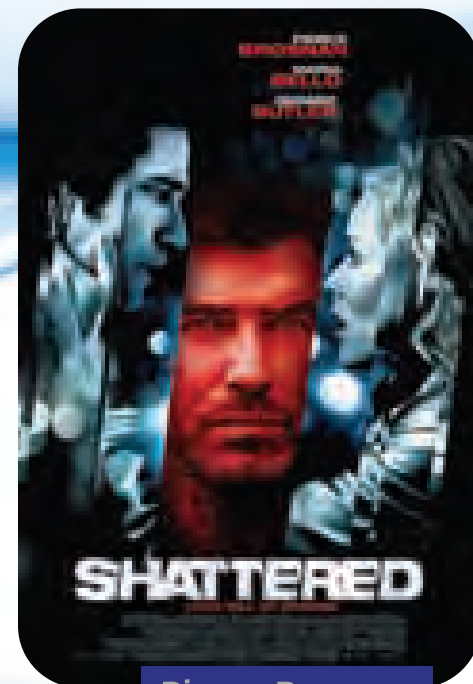
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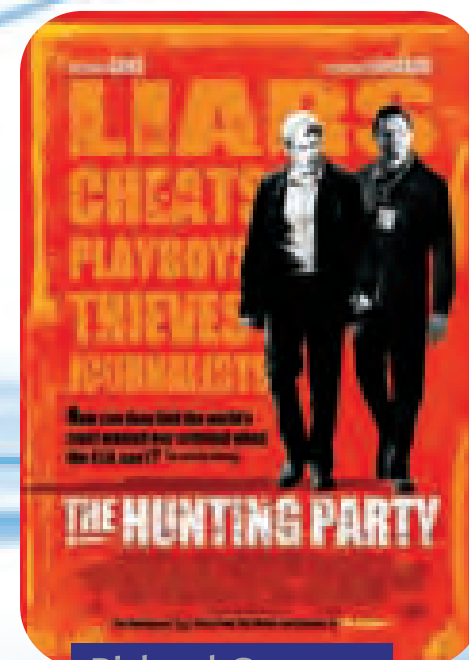
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Too Early to Call it Dead: ATF Faces AMAZIA's Fire

Several issues confronted the recently concluded eighth edition of the Asia TV Forum (ATF). The first matter of concern was pure business, since exhibitors were unable to find the notoriously elusive program buyers from Japan and the small TV stations in China. The second issue was economical, since costs were perceived to be too high for such a small trade show. But the third (and most insidious) problem was strategic: what should be done about AMAZIA, a new TV trade show competing for the same audience as ATF, which has been scheduled next year in Hong Kong?

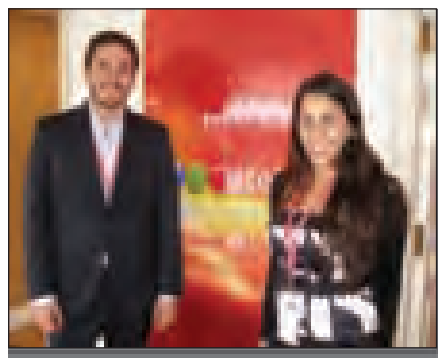
With those concerns in mind, exhibitors said goodbye to the lush



RCTV's Amina Galdo and Marc Paneque with Solimac's Jasinda Ahmad

gardens of the Shangri-La hotel in Singapore at the end of the three-day ATF event in late November. The 2008 edition, scheduled for December 10-12, will be held at the Suntec Convention Centre, centrally located in the downtown area of Singapore, far from the residential and shopping district of the Shangri-La's upper Orchard Road. Organizers explained that the decision to move to the Suntec Centre was dictated by the need for a larger space, more in-house dining options and a wider selection of nearby hotels. They assured exhibitors that prices would stay competitive and that they would still offer suite packages similar to those currently offered by the Shangri-La. ATF organizers offered a special tour of the Suntec venue to interested exhibitors on the last day of the market.

The move to the Suntec is indicative of adjustments that have become



Telefe's Gonzalo Cilley and Michelle Wasserman

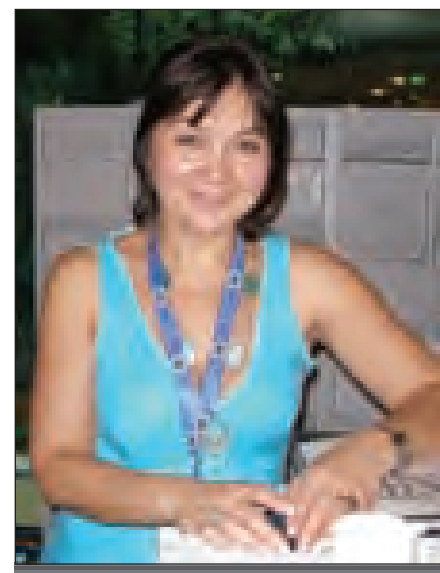
necessary since the announcement of competitor market AMAZIA, which will be organized by a very aggressive Reed Midem in Hong Kong, November 17-20. AMAZIA officials were among the exhibitors in Singapore, actively pursuing contacts. A separate division of Reed organizes the ATF.

VideoAge asked several distributors which market they would attend next year, and the unanimous consensus was that they weren't sure, but that attending both was an impossibility. Most companies said they'll wait and decide where to exhibit later on this year, once it becomes clear which buyers and distributors will participate at which market. RCTV's Amina Galdo said she assumed that AMAZIA would take over, while Globo TV's Claudine Bayma wasn't sure, but said that Globo will only exhibit at one event. CABLEready's Sabrina Toledo liked the idea of Hong Kong as a base to penetrate the Chinese territory since a slew of emerging

channels not found at ATF or MIP will surely come to AMAZIA, and said she felt it would be unthinkable to attend both markets. RTSI's Beatrice Grossmann, who was conducting her sales in the buyers-sellers lounge, hopes that the move to Hong Kong will mean a larger number of Japanese buyers in attendance, a group notoriously absent from Singapore. Like Grossmann, several other executives opted to do business in the lounge instead of renting suites. Among them was Screen Media Ventures' Almira Malyshev, who found the lounge much busier than the corridors of the exhibition floors.

To reach operators in Asia, TV France International (TVFI) — the umbrella organization that groups dozens of French distributors together — organizes annual showcases in both Japan and Korea. TVFI's presence in Singapore was once again strong this year, with an entire floor occupied by French companies. The traditional buyers luncheon was held at the Shangri-La's Waterfall Terrace.

In total, 4,700 participants from 50 countries and over 100 new companies were on hand at the ATF, with contingents coming from South Korea, Taiwan, China and Thailand. Speaking at the Opening Ceremony, which was one of the most well-attended events of the ATF, Dr. Lee Boon Young of Singapore's Ministry of Information underlined the strategic importance of Singapore within the global media sector, which is seeing major growth in the Asia Pacific region. The Opening Night party



Screen Media Ventures' Almira Malyshev

was held at The Arena, a trendy club in the Clarke's Quay area, a hub of Singapore nightlife. The celebration went well into the night and featured live music performances and dancing.

One of the most prominent initiatives of the Forum was the creation of the first Center for Content Protection (CCP) in Asia, a clearinghouse of information regarding digital distribution and content protection, with the aim of establishing clear legal frameworks on the issues. In its first year, the CCP will offer its services online to all members. Furthermore, it will produce electronic materials and



Caracol's Alexander Kochen and Pedro Davila

papers, and hold events and conferences. The cost for membership is U.S.\$2,500. The announcement was made during the Digital Future Symposium, an anchor event of the ATF, which is part of the Asia Media Festival, taking place in Singapore from November 14 to December 4. The Media Development Authority of Singapore, one of the key players in the region, hosts the festival.

When all was said and done, the ATF drew to a close with a record U.S.\$62.7 million in business deals, surpassing last year's total by 33 percent. Agreements included Singapore's Character Farm and distributor Six-Six-Eight licensing *Katharine* to Japan's Hi Corporation; and Korea's Iconix selling *Pororo the Little Penguin* to networks in Italy, Spain, the Middle East and Mexico. ●



Globo TV International's Karina Batista, Hugo Aloy, Claudine Bayma

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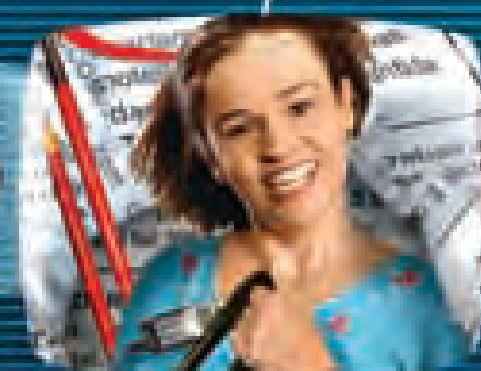
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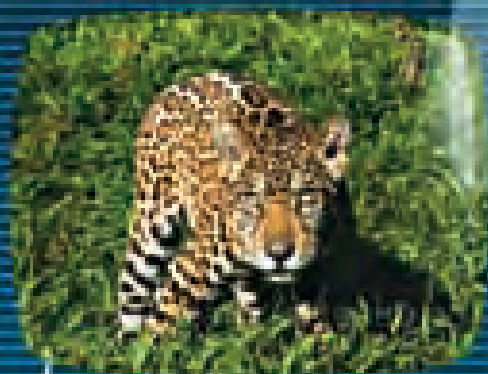
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EMOTIONS WITHOUT FRONTIERS

Local Independents Still Count

BY DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN

In the 32 years since I started my career at KTLA, then an independent local TV station in Los Angeles, television has changed a great deal. But television stations haven't.

Sure, technology has advanced in ways we never dreamed of — the first promos I ever cut were on two-inch quad videotape reels the size of trashcan lids — but the basic way we operate is still the same.

Good programming and promotion still draw big audiences. Solid news reporting still wins awards (and hopefully viewers). Capable sales staffs still bring in ad dollars, and the overnight ratings still serve as the daily report card.

Today, our little TV powerhouse, KUSI in San Diego, is the closest station I know of to what KTLA was in Los Angeles from the late 1940s until the early 1980s...the local independent where viewers turn first when local breaking news happens. They turned to KTLA first because they knew KTLA would cover the story longer and better



Douglas Friedman is director of Creative Services for KUSI Television, San Diego

than anyone in that coverage area. They could stay with a story for days without having to worry about pre-empting network programming.

When the wildfires broke out in San Diego this past October, *KUSI News* was able to stay on the air live without commercial interruption for 100 straight hours. It was exhilarating to be in a

newsroom during that week. I had heard many stories from my coworkers about the station's coverage of the 2003 wildfires — reporters facing walls of flames to get the tragedy on tape, anchors sitting at the news desk for 14 hours straight. But it wasn't until I lived through it myself that I understood what drove these dedicated news professionals. It was a commitment to bring the news to our viewers; news that could save lives. They recognize that the work they do is important, and they care about the public they serve.

Sure, there are challenges. In my area, Creative Services, I have a smaller staff than the network affiliates. Yet we turn out just as many promos (more in fact, since with eight hours a day of local news, we do nearly twice the number of topical spots as our nearest competitor). Artists fresh out of school create news graphics the quality of seasoned veterans, reflecting the same dedication as our news team. It all happens because this team cares about its work, and while that may sound cliché, it's a quality that I hear over and over again about our station from the public.

Working at a family-owned indie like

ours in a mid-size market such as San Diego also allows us to try things that our competitors can't. We can turn on a dime, experiment and try things that would be shot down before seeing the light of day in the hierarchy of the corporation-run affiliates. Whether it's producing a news special on a few hours' notice, or creating unique contests and promotions, decisions can be made quickly and the product created more efficiently.

And it can be great fun too. The environment at a smaller station breeds a competitiveness in the vein of David vs. Goliath. Technically we may be using our slingshot against the arsenal of bigger network guns, but we enjoy the flexibility that allows us to taunt the big guys and pull off some pretty amazing success stories.

Station size and affiliation aside, one other element of the television business hasn't changed. The movement of the typical television executive, whether it's in news, promotion, sales or other departments, is to move from small market to medium market to large market over the course of their 20s and 30s. Many of us who grew up in large markets sometimes also need to move in order to get that first management experience (I moved from Los Angeles to Philadelphia to grab my first director's title).

During my final year at Genesis/New World Distribution, in 1996, I oversaw \$20 million in spending on advertising and promotion for 10 syndicated shows, launching *Access Hollywood* and continuing hit programs such as *Real Stories of the Highway Patrol* and *Tales from the Crypt*. But the satisfaction of helping one station, here in San Diego, to number one in an important time period is just as fulfilling. Big things can come in small packages.

The opportunities for personal growth abound when working for an independent in a mid-size market. Unlike large market stations with very regimented structures that see very little inter-departmental movement, here we are encouraged to expand our knowledge, to try new things and learn as much about the entire broadcasting business as possible.

We're all part of the same team here. There's no 'us vs. them' and everyone contributes ideas on how to make things work even more smoothly. Developing camaraderie with co-workers, whether department heads or interns, is easy. Whether a pat on the back comes via the company picnic or recognition in the company newsletter, employees are told they're important, and are driven to contribute even more.

In conclusion, TV has changed a great deal. But at local television stations like independent KUSI, where the business of running a TV station depends on dedicated employees who are driven to excellence, things haven't changed at all. ●



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Power: A Mix of Bodle & Philip Set to Fuel Great Expansion

BY BOB JENKINS

Britain's Power Corp. is a unique and dynamic company that has grown exponentially in the 12 years since Justin Bodle founded it. Now, after nine months getting his feet under the table, head of Worldwide Sales, Chris Philip, spoke to *VideoAge* about the company's plans for a very exciting future.

When Bodle founded London-based Power in 1995, it was the only company outside the U.S. actively developing barter, especially in Eastern Europe and Latin America. Now, it is the only European independent able to secure a commitment for a minimum run of 13 episodes for its new adaptation of *Robinson Crusoe* for U.S. TV network NBC, while simultaneously distributing two soaps, *As the World Turns* and *Guiding Light*, both currently airing on another U.S. TV network, CBS.

The journey from a small single office selling other people's content to a major supplier of primetime drama such as *Flood, Ice, The Day of the Triffids* and, of course, *Robinson Crusoe*, has been an exciting one, and, following the appointment of Philip as president of Worldwide Sales, the future looks every bit as exciting.

Philip joined Power in April from NBC Universal, where he was vice-president, Latin America, responsible for the distribution of NBC Universal's TV and film library across all platforms in Latin American markets. At the time of his appointment, Bodle described Philip as "an entrepreneurial leader," adding, "his appointment is central to Power's commercial aspirations and current expansion strategy."

While at Universal, Philip teamed up with Ben Silverman, now co-chairman, NBC Entertainment and Universal Media Studios, to launch Reveille, a Los Angeles-based production and distribution company, which was founded by Silverman with backing from Universal. "Entrepreneurial" is the word that Silverman used to categorize both Philip and Power. "Power," commented Silverman, "is a very entrepreneurial company and Chris, being both quick and nimble, fits perfectly into this mold. He is," added Silverman, "honest, direct, extremely loyal, and cares about his friends, and that separates him from the pack because



Power thriller *Mistaken*

sales is all about relationships."

In the months since joining Power, Philip has overseen the doubling of the sales force and the opening of a new office in Miami, Florida, under the guidance of Pepe Echegaray (who joined the company from Carsey-Werner). A second office has been opened in Singapore under the stewardship of George Sakkalli, who joined Power recently from Granada International, where he had been responsible for sales to Asia. Mark Dineley has assumed responsibility for Digital Media, in addition to continuing his previous role overseeing Power's advertiser-funded deals across all international territories. An announcement regarding the appointment of a new vice president of Home Entertainment is due shortly. It has, Philip acknowledged, "been a very busy start to my time at Power."

In addition to the deal with NBC for *Robinson Crusoe*, for which Power retained international rights, meaning, as Philip pointed out, that "in light of the writers' strike, we will be one of very few companies at next year's L.A. Screenings with a brand-new series," the presence in their catalogue of two U.S. network soaps in addition to the event miniseries, feature films and TV movies makes Power, as Philip observed, "one of the most attractive independents in Europe."

"We are now looking," revealed Philip, "at an annual production slate of between four and six 'event' miniseries, our two on-going series and around 10 TV movies. Additionally," he continued, "we have entered into a first-look agreement with a major Miami-based producer, who

will be delivering a number of English-language features aimed at the U.S. Hispanic market every year."

Although this deal had not been formally announced at press time, and consequently Philip was not able to name the producer concerned, he was prepared to comment: "The U.S. Hispanic market is a huge market, and one which, in terms of feature films, the Hollywood majors have left largely unaddressed, although they have had some success with series. This cross-over is a very complex market to address, and I believe that after more than a decade in this market, I understand these complexities and I know that the producer with whom we are working understands them perfectly."

"We are determined," said Philip, "to use the local offices we have been



Chris Philip, head of Worldwide Sales at Power

opening to generate local production. And," he went on to explain, "in the past we have used international pre-sales to fund our productions, and, while we will continue to use this model, we will now be able to integrate U.S. Network funding into the equation, which will give a huge boost to our funding ability, and the products that I have already mentioned will play a significant role as locomotives [titles that drive deals] for future sales."

Of which there should be many. In addition to the developments already listed, Power is, revealed Philip, "developing with Reveille, a new scripted comedy format which we acquired from Latin America, which will be produced for the U.S. market. Details," he promised, "will be released shortly."

And Philip has been busy lining up an impressive slate of challenges for Dineley, the new vp, Digital, and his yet to be announced colleague heading up Home Entertainment. "We are," said Philip, "working with independent producers to develop and distribute youth-focused programming for both mobile and the Internet," adding, "I want to ensure we fully exploit all our rights across all platforms. As part of this ambition, I would expect that, over the coming few months, Power will announce a number of new, genre-specific platforms which it will either own, or in which it will, at the very least, be a major partner." ●



A shot from *Jekyll*, a TV movie Power will debut at NATPE



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Challenged Public Sector Has To Become More Challenging

BY LAURENCE KAUFMANN

Television in France is going through an unusual number of upheavals these days, politically, economically and technologically:

- A new government regulation (*Television du Futur*) regarding the modernization of broadcasting will soon be put in place.
- New competitors and free digital channels are cutting away at audiences.
- Cable, satellite and broadband TV outlets are continuing to multiply and grow, and soon, so will local TV channels.
- The television advertising market is getting more complex with new forms of media consumption by consumers.
- Broadcasters will turn to digital this year and are organizing future HD channels while positioning themselves in what is going to be a challenging new market: Personal Mobile Television.
- The TV sector must also take into account the still developing VoD market and must make sure to use it as a complementary source of revenue.

If the effects of the fast-rising Internet advertising market and globalization are to be considered, one easily understands that the TV sector in France is going through a unique, turbulent period.

Particularly challenged is the public TV sector, generally called France Télévisions, which is made up of France 2, France 3, France 4, France 5, and RFO (the overseas French network). All of these have to compete not only with France's historical heavyweight, national private broadcasters, but also with so-called "other televisions," which indicate new technology.

The birth of new digital channels, combined with the increasing number and growth of cable, satellite and broadband channels, has also had an effect on the audience of French broadcasters.

In addition, the public television sector was poorly served in the assignment of free-to-air digital channels: nine new private networks emerged against only one new public channel: France 4. (Arte, France 5 and RFO were also given frequencies, as were two parliamentary channels, which share a frequency.)

Moreover, new private digital



Daily soap *Plus Belle La Vie*

channels, such as TF1 and M6, which are part of large conglomerates, have access to well-known programs. They also dominate in the field of acquired reality TV shows, which are attracting sought-after young viewers.

Competition is therefore becoming fiercer in an environment that is not particularly favorable to the expansion of public television.

The *raison d'être* of public television stations has historically been based on some key notions: pluralism, ethics, quality and difference. However, the media have evolved in a market economy where reference key words are "audience," "marketing," "brand" and "profit." This implies substantial research, development, and program testing, leading to heavy financial investments.

The question now is how France Télévisions, as a public service station, can reaffirm its identity, and become a modern, complementary choice for French viewers when it has to meet restrictive broadcasting requirements with limited resources?

The president of France Télévisions, Patrick de Carolis, asked for an increase of the TV License Fee (at 116 euros per year, it is the lowest in Europe for the number of channels), which represents 60 percent of its revenues.

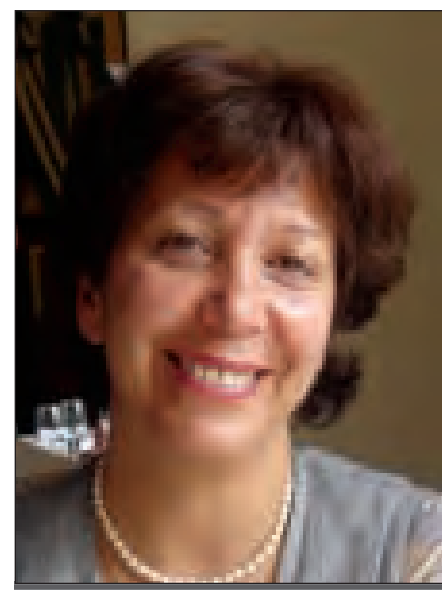
He will not be able to count on it. In fact, the country's president, Nicolas Sarkozy, would like to eliminate advertising on public TV and replace it with revenues generated by a levy on the commercial TV sector.

I would argue that it would probably be much easier for France Télévisions if it did away with its limited advertising revenues — which account for 40 percent of its resources or \$1 billion — and instead, received public donations, like PBS in the U.S.

This year, France Télévisions' budget will be increased by 3.5 percent, but that is not enough to cover the double broadcast in analog and digital in preparation for HD. Therefore, its president, de Carolis, foresees a reform of the public TV sector in 2008.

His goal is to modernize and harmonize the budget, enabling him to save a few million euros per year. For this reason, France Télévisions will not replace retiring employees.

Viewing state television as if it were public television, but managed like a private company without selling its soul to the commercial devil, is probably the main challenge facing France Télévisions today. It therefore could only reinvent itself by working on the content level. To a large extent, comparisons between



Laurence Kaufmann

commercial content and that of public broadcasters show that the programming is similar, apart from documentaries, news magazines and TV movies. However, finding new artistic talents and allowing innovative concepts to reach the airways, requires that programmers not be obsessed with ratings numbers.

The astonishing success of the daily soap, *Plus Belle La Vie* on France 3, which went from six percent market share at its debut in 2004 to more than 20 percent in 2007 (with a peak of 23 percent) proves that time and risk-taking can be as valuable as money. France 3 had it in mind to create a local version of British soap *Coronation Street* and spent time and money researching the artistic and economic developments of soaps around the world.

Despite disastrous debuts, France 3 management gave *Plus* a chance and engaged it to run 100 episodes, a risky decision considering the pressure it faced. The creative team went back to work on the series and the audience rose spectacularly. This gave way to other good news: merchandising, DVD sales and Internet revenues.

In addition, France Télévisions documentaries and magazines channel, France 5, is being rewarded for its innovative, original programming. It became the fifth most watched national channel in the highly competitive digital market in October 2007, proving that quality does pay.

This phenomenon is a reminder of *Apostrophes*, which ran on Antenne 2 (now France 2), in the '80s. Some Americans could hardly believe that the TF1 competitor would carry a live program on writers and books in primetime! Who would have thought that *Apostrophes* would become one of the channel's most popular programs, drawing substantial viewership numbers?

It even became familiar to a good number of U.S. viewers of New York's CUNY TV, which aired the show, that for five years was named "Best World TV Debate" by the American review *Connoisseur*. Recently, at the end of an episode of *Inside the Actors Studio*, James Lipton immortalized it, paying tribute to the "great Bernard Pivot in *Apostrophes*." ●

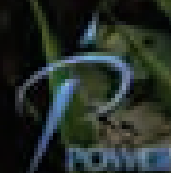
Laurence Kaufmann, a former executive of Antenne 2 (now France 2), is president of IDM, a Paris-based production and distribution company.

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A man is seen from the back, standing in a lush tropical jungle. He is shirtless and looking towards a clearing where several human skulls are impaled on wooden sticks. The scene is set against a backdrop of palm trees and a bright sky.

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The power in television

U.K. Scandal Raises the Phone Bar in the U.S.

BY LEVI SHAPIRO

M eet rockstar wannabe Betsy Gallagher. The 42-year-old mother of two and school board member has another title: *American Idol* voter. “I let the kids send in one text... then I vote twice,” she said. Participation TV (P-TV), in the form of voting and sweepstakes, has now reached the mainstream. The challenge is to maintain the trust of people like Gallagher in a changing business environment.

According to Nielsen, 180 million Americans send SMS text messages, an increase of 41 percent this year. And text voters are more like Gallagher than her 12-year-old son. Although teenagers may be pounding “OMG” and “TTYL” to one another on Instant Messenger, it is females aged 25-44 who are most likely to vote via text. “*Idol* changed everything,” said Jason George, chairman of Telescope, which handles all the back-end text voting for *Idol*. Added Alecia Bridgewater of AT&T, *American Idol* was a “turning point for getting people who fall outside the youth segment into text messaging.”

In the U.K., where Participation TV has a longer history, the industry is embroiled in controversy. In November 2006, a child at the children’s show *Blue Peter* was told to pose as a caller and won a prize. Similarly, U.K. breakfast broadcaster GMTV was fined £2 million for inconsistencies with its phone-in quizzes. This led to the June 2007 Ayre Report from U.K. regulator Ofcom, which recommended that broadcasters be held directly responsible, under threat of their broadcasting licenses, for all P-TV compliance. As a result, text voting in the U.K. is now either free or non-premium (i.e., standard text rates).

Suhail Bhat, Policy Initiatives director at the London-based Mobile Entertainment Forum, a global industry association for companies putting content on mobile, is leading efforts to create a framework, both in the U.S. and U.K., for best practices. Said Bhat: “Interactive services have a great future. The framework will ensure that consumers can use their mobile phones to vote or enter competitions with complete confidence.”

Advertisers will have to play a more significant role. U.S. carriers (such as AT&T, Verizon, Sprint and T-Mobile) are reluctant to jeopardize the \$50 or so they extract each month per subscriber (Average Revenue Per User or ARPU is the measurement for how much each subscriber spends on all mobile services, both voice and data. In the U.S., mobile ARPU is around \$55 per month) or to take unnecessary customer service calls, which typically cost \$8.50 per interaction. Philippe Poutonnet, director of Marketing at Singlepoint (the company handling about 60 percent of premium texts for broadcasters), cites innovative advertisers such as L’Oreal, Pepsi and Ford as companies who recognize the value of interacting with their consumers at the bottom of a

confirmation text.

Done well, Participation TV augments the “stickiness” that connects a viewer to a show. Paul Martin, executive director of Participation TV at the Santa Monica, California-based Game Show Network (GSN), wants to expand quiz shows like GSN’s *Play Mania* to develop indigenous P-TV concepts. “It can’t feel bolted-on. Any form of P-TV has to enhance the program. It would be quite cynical to just focus on revenue,” he said. Kai Buhler, general manager of MindMatics (one of the aggregators ensuring all the votes are tallied and the back-end functions properly) agreed. “It is really important for producers to incorporate interactivity at the earliest stages of development.”

However, there is still plenty of



Jason George, chairman of Telescope

revenue in Participation TV. In the U.S., the December 5, 2007 return of *Deal or No Deal*’s Wednesday version achieved a response rate of over one million votes. That is almost 10 percent of viewers.

Another show with an impressive response rate is cable TV network BET’s *Take the Cake*, which earned more Q3 U.S. PSMS (Participant SMS) revenue than any other show (*Deal or No Deal* was on hiatus). In a segment of \$50 million revenue, *Take the Cake* took 10 percent of revenues and nearly twice as much as its closest competitor, *Hell’s Kitchen*. Martez Moore, general manager of BET Mobile, considers PSMS “ancillary to our model. There is a natural platform convergence for our [18-34, urban] demographic. Our programs include multiple mobile executions,” he said. While Betsy Gallagher in Atglen, Pennsylvania may send an occasional text for *American Idol*, a majority of BET’s 18-34-year-old viewers of *106 & Park* (BET’s most popular music video show) watch television with their laptops open and cell phones on.

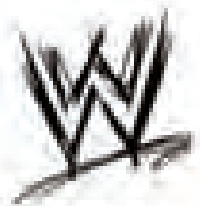
These numbers are still miniscule compared to the 50 million “free” texts sent last year to *American Idol*. Telescope’s George believes the industry is overlooking long-term consumer value. “The major mistake has been to focus on revenue rather than Customer Relationship Management (CRM). TV is great at acquiring people, but we don’t do anything with that response. This is about building a behavioral-based relationship over time.”

The challenge for all broadcasters is how to turn passive viewers into active customers. BET’s Moore also advocates the long-term role of CRM in Participation TV. “Once a deep body of data has been gathered it will help us understand lifetime viewer value. Today, we have a core group of roughly 20 percent hard-core users that drive a disproportionate amount of volume and traffic. Future efforts will address the other 80 percent.”

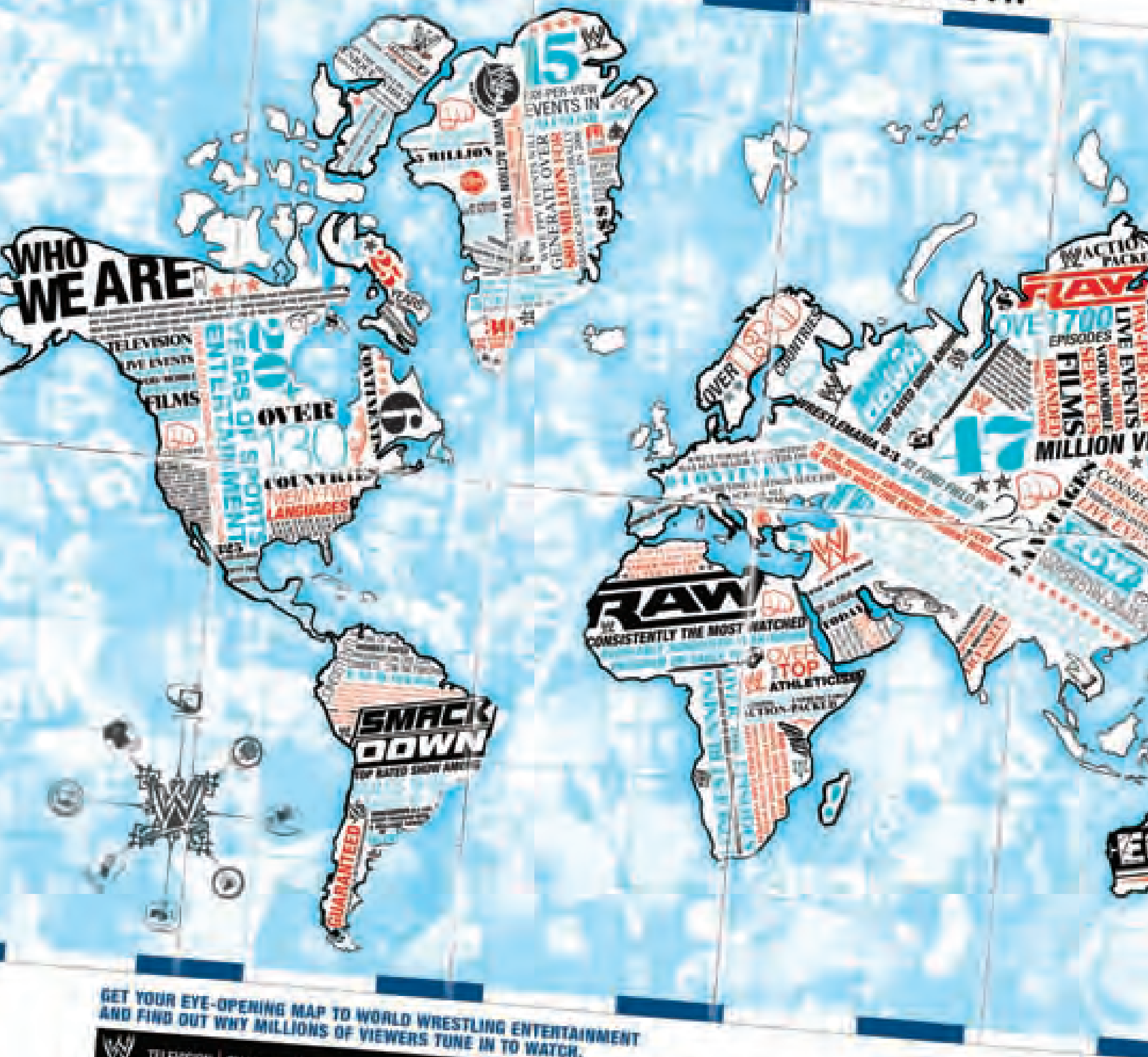
Participation TV is at a crossroads. Producers, broadcasters, advertisers and network operators have an opportunity to increase engagement with their consumers. The challenge is to maintain a credible environment that appeals to people like Betsy Gallagher. ●



American Idol received 50 million “free” texts last year



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Proliferation of TV Events as A Way to Get Int'l Attention

BY DIETER BROCKMEYER

Germany has a highly competitive TV industry and a highly competitive Lander [or State] structure. Each of the 16 Landers wants to be a location that lures in media and communications-focused companies. As a result, Germany also has a slew of highly competitive TV industry screenings events — not just internationally, but within the country. Some of them have been successful, while others are still finding their niches.

The traditional “German Screenings” date back to the “ancient” times of pre-commercial TV. The 32nd annual event, which took place at the Leipzig Westin Grand Hotel last month, is still the domain of public broadcasters. This year, German United Distributors (owner of Bavaria Media, which is very active at the Screenings) and Telepool (both closely associated with German pubcaster ARD), Austria’s ORF and Deutsche Welle (Germany’s official multi-language international radio and TV service), were all on hand.

This group has acquired a commercial touch since Telepool hooked up with Mediengruppe RTL last year to act as international sales agent for TV programs coming from the German RTL section, such as crime action series *Cobra 11*. The annual event is quite popular, especially with buyers from neighboring European and Eastern European countries. They particularly like the homey atmosphere of a small event and the fact that the screening facilities are set up in cozy hotel rooms.

There is also the “Cologne Conference,” which began as a result of Cologne being one of the commercial centers of the German TV industry and since North Rhine Westphalia, a German Lander, couldn’t defend its position as an industry leader in media. The Cologne Conference launched as part of a much bigger convention and trade show dealing with a mix of media ventures. The declared ambition of the Cologne Conference in the beginning was to compete directly with international industry events such as



Inside the EFM

MIP-TV. Consequently, the first editions of the market took place on a riverboat on the banks of the Rhine River right across from the Cologne Convention Centre, and attracted only a small number of international buyers. The concept quickly failed, but after a period of trying to find a new niche, it relaunched in October. The Cologne Conference strengthened its festival approach and now serves merely to showcase exceptional and innovative TV programs, with no sales ambitions whatsoever.

The third major German screenings event is a much more serious challenge, though it’s well-equipped with public subsidies. The annual European Film Market (EFM) was launched about five years ago as part of the renowned German film festival Berlinale, which takes place every February in Berlin (see story on page 26). The event combines screenings for cinema and TV with international co-production pitching sessions. For the screenings session, the EFM has opted to focus on commercial art-house productions. The approach has worked. Organizers have reported

growth of exhibitor and participant numbers year after year. In 2006, numbers were up 30 percent, with 240 companies from 45 countries. The following year, the event boasted 260 companies from 46 countries with 700

films available and over 1,000 screenings held in 31 cinemas and screening cabins. During Berlinale 2007, the EFM had grown too large for the historical Martin-Gropius Building, where it had taken place for a number of years, and organizers were forced to extend the property with tents. They expect new record participation figures for this February’s Screenings. Unfortunately, there is no detailed breakdown available as to where the buyers come from for this festival.

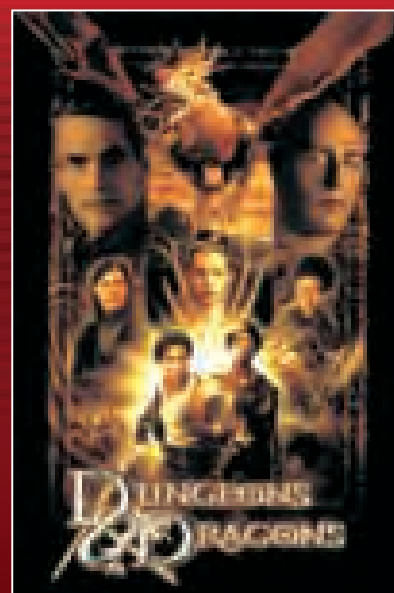
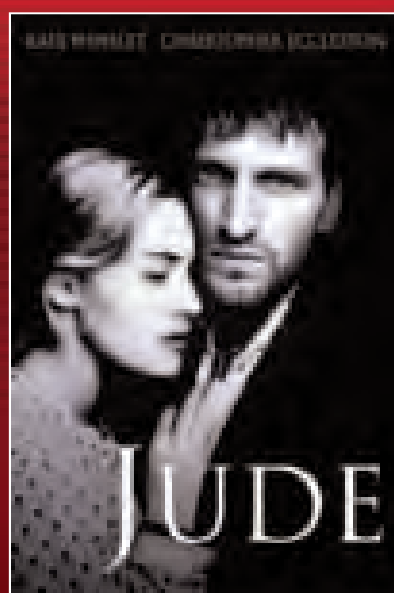
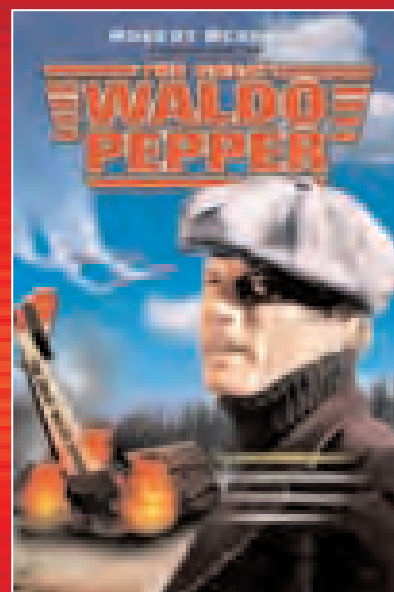
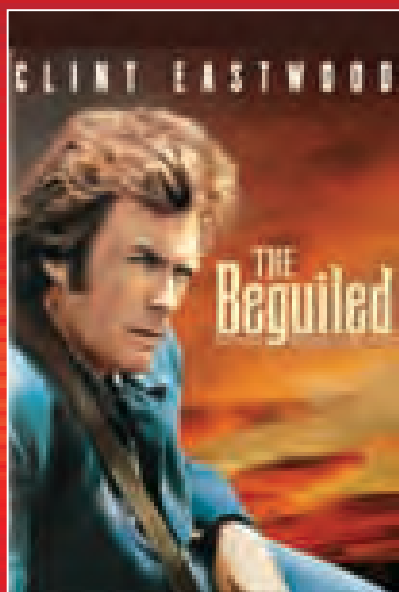
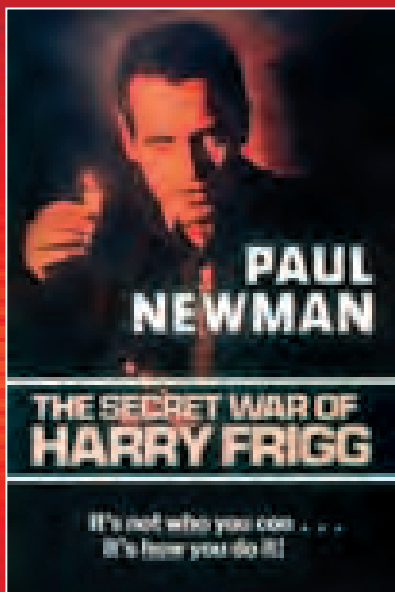
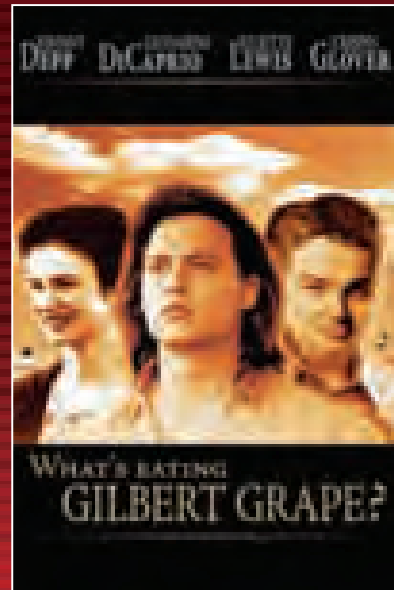
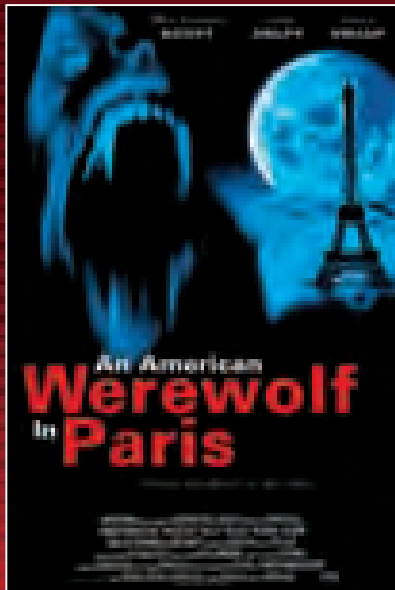
Regardless of all these screenings, there are many more film and TV festivals in Germany that offer the possibility to screen and buy programs or to establish co-producing relationships. There is, for instance, the Oberhausener Kurzfilmtage, an event birthed in the days of the rebellious 1960s, which has turned into a globally renowned festival and market for short films. The Munich Filmfest, taking place every June, has turned into a serious domestic industry platform for Germany. Baden Baden, a small city in the southeast of Germany, has established its successful Fernsehfilm Festival, where prizes are awarded for the best feature films in German TV over the last year. There are also two prestigious festivals targeting newcomers, Max Ophuels Festival in Saarbrücken and the Hofer Filmtage in Hof. In addition, the Lucas Kinderfilmfestival in Frankfurt is the oldest A-Festival in Germany that focuses exclusively on kids programming. Each of these events tries not only to create awareness of the films presented, but also to be seen as a marketplace from which its content starts a successful journey. And if this journey leads to global success, so much the better for a small market in a German province that will be able to at least briefly compare with the glitz and glamour of Cannes or Los Angeles. ●



Winners of the Cologne Conference’s prize for “Best Adoption of an International Format,” *Das perfekte Dinner* (Come Dine With Me)

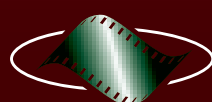
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AFM Shift Created a Vacuum Being Filled by Berlin's Film Mart

BY LUCY COHEN BLATTER

Whereas the Berlin Film Festival attracts high-wattage stars, it's the concurrent nine-day European Film Market (EFM) where the wheeling and dealing takes place. While actors and actresses vie for coveted Golden and Silver Bear awards at the Berlinale, executives get down to business at the Art Deco-style Martin-Gropius-Bau (MGB), located minutes away from the festival headquarters at Potsdamer Platz.

The Berlinale and its symbiotic market, EFM — which will take place February 7-17 — is the first big film event of 2008, kicking off a year of almost non-stop film trade events. Beki Probst, head of the European Film Market (who is celebrating her 20th anniversary with the market this year) said the American Film Market's date shift, from February to November, has helped EFM increase its numbers. "There's a significant time gap between the European Film Market and Cannes now, which makes it easier for buyers and distributors who were once unable to attend the market in addition to AFM. We've found that to be the case with many Asian companies."

"The change of the AFM's date has undeniably made the EFM more important to us," said Ruby Rondina, festival and publicity manger at Canada's Cinemavault Releasing. She added that her company's *modus operandi* at the market involves sales, since most of its acquisitions efforts are concentrated on



Cinemavault's Ruby Rondina

the earlier Sundance Film Festival.

As of press time, the expected number of exhibitors this year was up from last year (which Probst described as a "record year"). A total of 178 companies from 47 countries have already confirmed plans to exhibit.

The arrival of new faces in the last couple of years has caused market organizers to expand space to an area called Exhibitor Offices at 11 Potsdamer Platz, and has caused distributors to take hotel suites.

Last year, there was a good deal of frustration from companies holding court at the Exhibitor Offices, who complained that buyers didn't know where to find them and that foot traffic was low. "It was a 10-minute walk from the Martin-Gropius to the offices and it was freezing cold," said Andre Relis, vp of Sales and Acquisitions at Vision Films. "There was a problem with the marketing and publicity of the business center. We would have appreciated more walk-bys," he said.

While EFM's Probst agreed that foot traffic is scarcer at the annex, she guaranteed that this year, thanks to advertisements, signage and information booths, buyers will have an easier time making their way out of the Martin-Gropius. And once again, a free shuttle will run between the two locations. While she recognized that many of the small- and mid-sized companies who hold court at the nearby offices would prefer to distribute at the MGB, Probst explained that, "It's not a huge space and we have to give first priority to our clients who have been with us for many years."

One company that managed to snag a space in the MGB is Porchlight Entertainment. Its president of Worldwide Distribution, Ken DuBow — who described EFM as a "back door into Europe" and expects to see broadcasters in addition to theatrical and DVD distributors at the market — said his placement in the upstairs area of the MGB gives him reason to bring a full sales team to the market. While DuBow said he probably would have opted to take a suite at the Hyatt had he not gotten space in the main building, he celebrated his premium (and less expensive) placement. "It's really important to be in the same spot as everyone else," he said.

Mondo TV's Sales coordinator, Roberto Farina, said that even those exhibiting at the MGB last year had

problems with the market's logistics. "Last year, very few people came into the exhibition area. We had days in which the only activity was spending time reading magazines such as *VideoAge*. This, in our opinion, happened because too many companies had suites in various city hotels. Also, two big halls on the second floor were taken by majors, so people entering the MGB did not feel the need to come back again to visit the exhibition floor." Regardless, Mondo TV will, once again, sell its cartoon-centric content in the Italian pavilion of the MGB this year.

But many companies are still opting for completely different locales. Screen Media Ventures, for one, will exhibit at the Ritz Carlton, along with some other independents. In addition to presenting the "most eminent independent library of films," according to the company's vp of International Sales, Michael Dwyer, this year, the firm will unveil nearly 100 Universal titles for DVD distribution in Europe.

Doug Schwalbe, head of International at New York-based Classic Media, has decided to forgo the suites and booths altogether, but will attend the market, for the first time, to meet current and potential clients. As a company focusing primarily on kids' entertainment, EFM has never been that important. "Most of that business gets done at MIP and MIPCOM," he said. But this year, Schwalbe's coming armed with a new adult property. "My main objective is to promote our brand new non-kids program, *Turok*, which revolves around a cult videogame franchise," he said.

As of press time, Rigel Entertainment CEO John Laing had not decided whether he would take a suite at the Ritz, but said his choice to screen and hold meetings there last year worked out well.

But Laing agreed with many of his colleagues, bemoaning the fact that the market is so spread out. While he emphasized the fact that Berlinale is a premiere film festival, he said the market's facilities leave much to be desired. "Facilities are what make a market good, and the layout is just not as market-friendly as the others — it's even less convenient than MIFED used to be." Classic's Schwalbe agreed: "I have to say, I'd rather be in Milan in October than Berlin in February," he said, referring to the fact that EFM has, in many ways, taken the place of the now-



Porchlight Entertainment's Ken DuBow

defunct MIFED market.

Laing also pointed out that with AFM in November, the Hong Kong Film Festival in March, and Cannes in May, the industry is saturated with film markets. "But that said, we're easy prey. If you create a forum and buyers attend, the sellers will have to be there too," he said.

Vision's Relis said that for him, the presence of film, DVD and documentary buyers, as well as the festival's surrounding "buzz," have made the market a "must attend." He added: "There's definitely a focus on Germany. But we've had great success solidifying deals with buyers from all over the world there." Thanks to its music division, Vision Music, Relis said the company is often approached by German producers looking to make deals. "We haven't picked up anything from the market in the last three years since we focus on selling, but we're always open to that," he said.

According to Rüdiger Böss, svp, Programming Acquisitions at ProSiebenSat.1, the allure of the market can be traced to the fact that "U.S. independents are there in full-force [ever since] the shift of the AFM. The market is more important than it has been in the past," he said. At EFM, Böss and his ProSieben colleagues will buy films for all of its TV channels — including ProSieben, Sat1, Kabel Eins and SBS stations — in "all forms, including pay and VoD."

Aside from meetings, the market has several different components. Under the auspices of the EFM lies the Berlinale Co-Production Market, a three-day event where international producers and financiers meet to find partners for selected projects; Straight From Sundance gives international buyers first crack at new films from the American independent scene; Works in Progress is a forum for young talented Latin American filmmakers offering buyers and sales agents a chance to see talent in its early stages and help the filmmakers get on their feet; and German Cinema is a curated series that promotes German cinema to the international market.

While extra events, and logistics are undoubtedly important, EFM's Probst said, "Successful films are what make a successful market. You can have a smooth market with great planning, but if there are no success stories and no movies with good buzz, you can forget about the rest. So before the market we're always hoping for a couple of gems." ●

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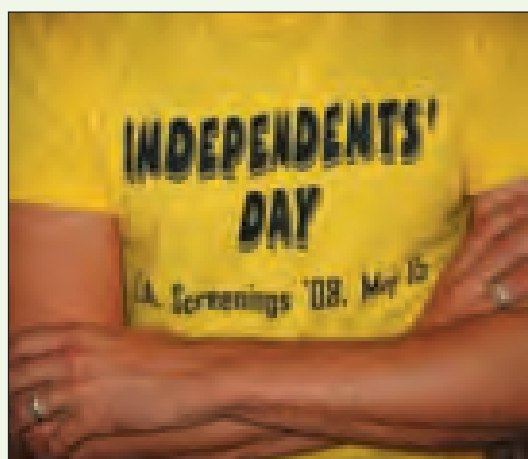
Día de los Independientes en los L.A. Screenings

En el desayuno anual ofrecido en MIPCOM por *VideoAge*, el Editor Dom Serafini presentó el Día de los Independientes: Un día completamente dedicado a la proyección general de films, comidas, conferencias y eventos, preparado para reproducir el ambiente reinante en los estudios durante los L.A. Screenings. El evento tendrá lugar el jueves 15 de mayo, el año próximo, en los L.A. Screenings.

“Esta es la única manera en la que podemos hacer viable los L.A. Screenings para los productores independientes,” dijo Serafini, haciendo referencia a que en los años recientes, los Estudios cerraron todas las ventanas de oportunidades para los productores independientes en los L.A. Screenings.

Luego del decepcionante resultado de los L.A. Screenings

(Continuación a la página 28)



Los Nuevos Desafíos de los Estudios de Hollywood

I Tiembla Hollywood por temor a enfrentarse a una nueva Media? Recientemente el diario *Los Angeles Times* publicó que, “Los Medios principales [se encuentran] en pánico digital,” y esto es, posiblemente, la razón

por la cual corren a realizar compras millonarias de Webs de redes sociales fácilmente reproducibles. News Corp., la compañía madre de Fox, por ejemplo, pagó US\$ 580 millones de dólares para adquirir la Web MySpace, agregándola a sus otras 19 operando ya en Internet. Una Web de chismes, TMZ.com, devino en show producido para

televisión por Telepictures y distribuida por Warner Bros. Frente a esto se tiene la impresión que los profesionales del entretenimiento tienden a temer al contenido desarrollado en la Web por amateurs (esencialmente el 60 por ciento

(Continuación a la página 30)

Problemas de Rating

POR JON CURRIE

El tema relacionado con la iniciativa de Nielsen denominada “Live plus” es que nadie está realmente seguro de qué se trata y qué significa para ellos. En el mundo real de la calle todo es confusión. Pero, el tema de fondo se mantiene: ¿Qué hará esto por mí?

“Live plus” es el término genérico para “Live plus el mismo día” (live plus same day), “Live plus tres” (live

(Continuación a la página 32)

NATPE es Importante para los Latinos e Hispanos

POR DOM SERAFINI

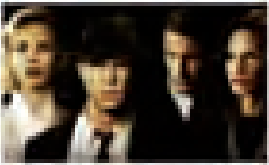
Hablemos del futuro de NATPE. Pero previo a describir como es imaginado, una franca (mas que amena) revisión de la actual situación.

La ubicación de NATPE en el calendario lo hace viable, ya que rompe los seis meses que separan MIPCOM de MIP-TV. El argumento de que hay demasiados shows de negocios, muchos creen, no es especialmente válido en este momento en que se ha vuelto indeseable pasar por aeropuertos y tener que ser virtualmente desnudados por los guardas de seguridad. Especialmente se ven afectados aquellos que viajan por los aeropuertos de Londres en Inglaterra y por Dallas en Texas, aun cuando la dificultad de viajar tiende a ser un problema universal. Por ejemplo, el último mes de noviembre en un viaje a Nueva York desde Roma, Italia, el piloto de Delta “se renegó” a cargar nafta, entonces, el avión en tercera línea de despegue, tuvo que retornar a la puerta de embarque, causando tres horas de

(Continuación a la página 28)



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Independientes

(Continuación de la página 27)

para muchos productores independientes, es importante que este sector evolucione, o podría ser el final de la participación de los Indies en el evento.

“Recrearemos el mismo ambiente que ofrecen los Estudios a los compradores,” anunció Serafini. “Tendremos bolsos de fiesta y DVD’s promocionales, además de la proyección general de múltiples productos. De esta manera podremos sacar ventaja de la gran cantidad de compradores que toman parte en los L.A. Screenings.”

Entre los que participaron del desayuno estuvieron RCTV que ya se ha

comprometido con el evento. Otros tales como Granada, Comarex, Televisa, Carsey-Werner y Cablerady mostraron gran interés.

Además, compañías que no pueden concurrir como las Italianas Rai Trade y Mediaset, también han manifestado su interés.

Luego el desayuno de trabajo, el Presidente de NATPE Rick Feldman, anunció que su organización será co-esponsor del almuerzo para compradores y vendedores durante el Día de los Independientes. A esto se agrega que Roberto Filippelli del Forum Brasil TV, está considerando esponsorear el desayuno, mientras el Florida Media Market estaría organizando un seminario en el que los distribuidores se conviertan en compradores y los productores, en vendedores.

El programa completo del Día de los Independientes está estructurado de tal manera que desalienta a que otros eventos compitan con él, a su vez no

interfiere con las proyecciones de los propios Estudios, que comienzan un día después del último anuncio realizado en evento del Upfront, el 16 de mayo.

El 15 de mayo, explicó Serafini, las proyecciones generales serán realizadas de 15 a 17 horas para que puedan llegar los compradores que arriban de sus vuelos esa mañana, y cada compañía independiente que participa podrá hacer la presentación ante los compradores de un show de tres minutos de duración.

“Los independientes serán iguales a los Estudios,” dijo Serafini. “No hay otra alternativa. Esto debe ser realizado para salvar a los independientes en los L.A. Screenings.” Serafini remarcó que las proyecciones estarán limitadas a tan solo 20 compañías para que no sea algo inmanejable. Por lo tanto, ni bien el límite de participantes sea completado, las listas serán cerradas. El costo para ser parte del día de los Independientes es de U.S.\$ 1,100 por compañía e incluirá la invitación al almuerzo para cuatro

personas.

El día comenzará con un café olé (café libre para todos), seguido por un desayuno de trabajo, un seminario llamado “Vendiendo a los distribuidores: Una guía para Productores,” luego el almuerzo, las proyecciones generales y por supuesto, la fiesta.

“Hay algo para todos,” dijo Serafini. “Por lo tanto los compradores participarán al menos en una parte del evento, y nadie podrá discutir la importancia del Día de los Independientes. Es la mejor manera en la que *VideoAge* puede influir para fortalecer los L.A. Screenings y contribuir al éxito de los independientes.”

Finalmente, Serafini marcó que el Día de los Independientes en los L.A. Screenings está abierto para toda publicación comercial interesada en involucrarse, ya debe ser el interés de todos asegurar que los Indies no renuncien al evento en L.A. ●

NATPE

(Continuación de la página 27)

demoras y una innumerable cantidad de conexiones perdidas.

En lo que respecta al mercado en sí mismo, NATPE se mantiene especialmente viable para el sector de la TV Latinoamericana. Hasta que una convención Europea tal como Monte Carlo reaparezca en el horizonte a inicios de febrero, NATPE debería mantener su atractivo también para los europeos.

Esta convocatoria es tan fuerte, que incluso intenta recortar parte del mercado que atiende el Berlín Film Festival, evento al que ambos están en contra de ayudarse y que va en contra de ambas partes (p. Ej. ¡hace frío!)

Además, la ubicación en EE.UU. es ideal, en el sentido que el país debería al menos, tener tres convenciones relacionadas con TV shows por año. NATPE es en el mes de enero, AFM regresa a febrero y los L.A. Screenings en mayo. Yo correría la importante LICO Convención para Licencias (pero con otra gerencia) de Nueva York a Hong Kong o a Singapur a inicios de diciembre, para combinarlo con una convención mas pequeña sobre programación, como el Forum Asia TV, que no ha conseguido despegar, a pesar de los numerosos intentos. Pero desafortunadamente, diferentes problemas convergen alrededor de NATPE.

Primero, debido al cambio del

mercado televisivo en los EE. UU, en el que los distribuidores locales pueden realizar hasta tres ofertas para syndicar un nuevo programa, NATPE ya no es viable para los Estudios, que son los principales sindicadores domésticos.

Segundo, habiendo perdido el “arrastre” doméstico, las divisiones internacionales de los Estudios encuentran que NATPE ya no es efectivo, tomando en consideración que las ventas al mercado de TV Latinoamericano representan alrededor del 8 por ciento de todas sus ganancias.

Tercero, con la pérdida de la venta sindicada del mercado doméstico, el evento ha perdido su atractivo para los compradores europeos y asiáticos, como así también para muchos distribuidores.

Cuarto, la ubicación en Las Vegas no es la más deseable. Fue dictada solamente por su proximidad a Los Ángeles y con la intención de atraer a las Estudios Americanos.

Quinto, el evento está repartido en cinco pisos y suits de recepción, haciéndolo problemático para todos los participantes.

Pero por sobre todo, el valiente Presidente de NATPE, Rick Feldman, está entrando en el segundo de sus tres años de contrato (luego del cual ha manifestado su deseo de retirarse). Bajo esta multitud de actuales desafíos, NATPE debe encontrar la fuerza necesaria para evolucionar. Y existen varias opciones:

Unirse al AFM (American Film Market) y desplazarse a Santa Mónica a finales de enero. Esto dará una excusa al AFM para tener lugar en un momento más deseable del calendario y dar a NATPE un nuevo hogar.

Moverse a Miami en enero, dado que NATPE es primordialmente un evento

de la TV Latinoamericana y realizarlo en una sola sala de convenciones. La ubicación en Miami es también atrayente para los europeos, y el mercado Hispano puede ser un atractivo más.

Hacer de NATPE un mercado que genere ganancias (“for-profit”) a inversores que inviertan en el evento. Con el agregado de recursos financieros y gastos pagos, el evento bien puede atraer a los grandes compradores.

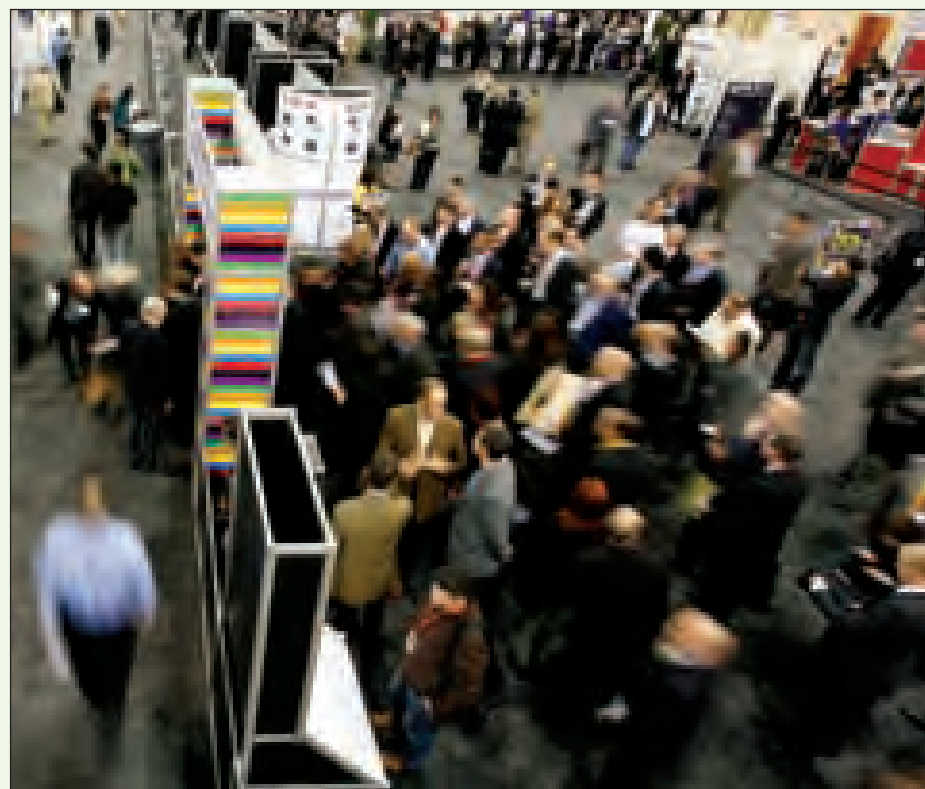
Devolver al evento su condición de mercado -solamente de- contenidos, en el que los Broadcasters y Ejecutivos de los medios electrónicos sean compradores. Realizar recepciones y encuentros de trabajo con oradores de primer nivel.

Unirlo a los Emmys Internacionales. Eventualmente el comité directivo de

esta organización tendrá el coraje de darle (a NATPE) un futuro.

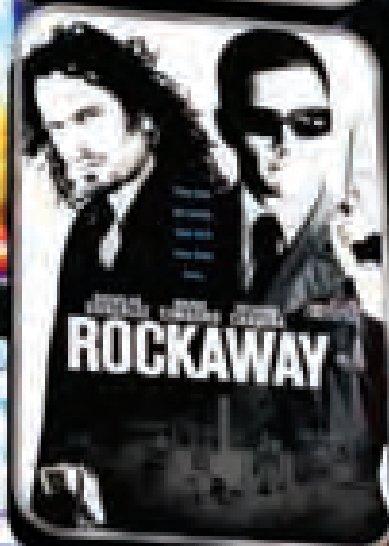
No publicar durante el evento ninguna publicación, pero alentar a las editoriales a entrar al mercado. Los recursos publicitarios disponibles durante NATPE no benefician la organización y desalienta a una editorial a invertir en el evento.

Seguramente algunos lectores pensarán que son errados los argumentos mencionados y las derivaciones subsecuentes, pero nuestra experiencia es que ignorar (aunque sean solo problemas percibidos) o proponer soluciones irreales, tan solo acelerará el deceso final del evento. Tal como dice la expresión: Si uno no puede hacerse cargo de la solución, entonces no hay solución. ●



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Los Estudios de Hollywood

(Continuación de la página 27)

de los videos en YouTube y otros sitios Web similares son realizados por amateurs).

Hollywood está mostrándose con una actitud algo esquizofrénica frente a esta nueva Media. Es cierto que la tecnología está cambiando todo para los Estudios, pero es cierto también que, para los Majors, parafraseando al autor Italiano Luigi Pirandello, todo puede cambiar mientras nada cambie en sus bolsillos. Mientras, por un lado, los Estudios tienen pánico digital y abrazan ciegamente todo tipo de Media digital; por otro lado, saben perfectamente hacia dónde quieren llegar: Tomar la ventaja de la tecnología digital y de la Banda Ancha para poder enviar sus films directamente a los hogares de los consumidores sin necesidad de intermediarios, bajando así, los costos de producción, promoción y distribución. Esto es llamado una ventana Puerta-a-puerta por la prensa Italiana.

Mientras tanto, el consultor de Medios, Russell J. Kagan marca: "Gracias a la Banda Ancha, las jóvenes generaciones no conocen el DVD." Pero hasta que los Estudios no dejen de hacer dinero con los DVDs, no los dejarán de lado.

Ciertamente, lo que produce malestar a los Majors es la actual necesidad de compartir ganancias con sus intermediarios: 60 por ciento para las cadenas de ventas de DVDs. (sin incluir los costos de manufactura), 50 por ciento a los operadores de Cable y Satélite (por servicios de Video-on-Demand), y 20 por ciento a las salas de cine (en la primera semana; luego puede aumentar hasta el 50 por ciento)

Gary Marenzi, Co-presidente de la MGM Worldwide Television Distribution comentó: "A nosotros no nos agrada dar nuestro producto en consignación y solamente compartir ganancias, pero estamos abiertos a construir negocios en los que recibamos nuestra parte de manera razonable. [Es mas,] no podemos ignorar las diferentes tecnologías de distribución. Como proveedor de contenidos, es nuestro trabajo distribuir de manera eficiente y capitalizar el contenido. Debemos mantenernos flexibles, pero también marcar nuestra preocupación acerca de temas como la seguridad y ser compensados económicamente de manera correcta."

De acuerdo a Kagan, los Majors están todavía irritados por no haber tomado el control total del estilo de desarrollo de films que tuvo HBO para su Network de canales de TV en 1981. Estas Networks fueron las primeras en comprender y explotar la -entonces- nueva tecnología satelital. Este es un error que los

Estudios no quisieran repetir.

Para los Estudios, la eliminación de explotación de ciertas "ventanas" de contenidos podría ser no auspiciosa y no deseable. Pero a pesar de ello, alientan completamente la introducción de nuevas formas de explotación para sus productos audiovisuales. Los errores cometidos por la Industria discográfica les sirven como advertencia a tomar en cuenta.

Tal como dijera recientemente Edgar Bronfman, Chairman de la Warner Music en una conferencia de inversores en Nueva York: "La industria musical está creciendo. La industria discográfica no está creciendo."

Para los Majors, la experiencia con el videocasete fue suficiente. Fue una tecnología que los Estudios quisieron eliminar con su nacimiento en 1984, pero que luego se convirtió en una de sus mayores fuentes de ingresos adicionales.

La Banda Ancha, más que el satélite, está posicionada para abrir la ventana del Puerta-a-puerta para los Estudios. Ellos ya se han beneficiado de esta tecnología al

muchos hogares."

Para evitar la espera del tiempo de bajada (download), todos los Majors -excepto Sony Pictures- han negociado con Vudu para la entrega Puerta-a-puerta de sus películas vía Banda Ancha. La caja de Vudu, que cuesta UD\$300 dólares, permite a los espectadores, por tan solo UD\$6 dólares, ver un film en su pantalla de televisión una vez que ha sido seleccionado.

Marenzi acota, "Estamos trabajando con Apple en Estados Unidos y con otras plataformas y estamos adoptando todas las formas de distribución digital, tanto en el streaming como en el downloading, somos agnósticos en lo que hace a la plataforma y neutrales en lo que se refiere a la tecnología."

La televisión por Cable se ha beneficiado de servicios como los ofrecidos por HBO, que los mismos Estudios se han ocupado de hacer crecer. Actualmente los Estudios se favorecen por los servicios de Banda Ancha ofrecidos por el operador de Cable.



Gary Marenzi

reducir la piratería de los DVDs. De hecho, en el 2005, los Estudios Americanos fueron sujetos de pérdidas por valor de UD\$3.7 billones de dólares debido a la piratería alrededor del mundo. En el 2006, este valor se redujo a UD\$2.3 billones de dólares, gracias al crecimiento del bajado (download) de películas por Internet. Pronto, será mucho mas caro producir y vender DVDs piratas comparando el precio con el de films legítimamente bajados de la Web.

Además, otros tres desarrollos juegan a favor de los Estudios: La virtual ausencia de nuevos costos para la Banda Ancha; el bajo costo de las grandes pantallas planas de TV; y tecnologías para visión inmediata, como Vudu, un aparato desarrollado por Santa Clara, una empresa con base en California. Para el segundo punto, el pionero de la Internet Marc Cuban declaró: "Los consumidores prefieren ver películas en pantallas de TV de 70 pulgadas." Él predijo que "los equipos de HDTV serían mas grandes y económicos. En seis años, la pantalla plana de 100 pulgadas será la norma en

El precio fijo de la Banda Ancha, sin embargo, es ahora un problema para los operadores de Cable, a tal punto que uno de ellos, Comcast, lo ha quitado a alguno de sus suscriptores debido a que consumían demasiado el servicio. La manera agresiva de Comcast de manejar su red tiene como objetivo que el tráfico no devore demasiada Banda Ancha.

Para los Estudios, el costo de transporte por Banda Ancha de un film de los servidores al consumidor es cerca del 1 por ciento, por usuario, por hora. Dijo Kagan, "Para los Majors el costo de transporte vía Banda Ancha es comparable a la manufacturación de un DVD."

Para aplacar a los operadores de Cable, los estudios ahora están examinando el modelo llamado "Día y Fecha", que es, la emisión simultánea de los films a las salas de cine y a los que piden VoD. Obviamente este modelo no es atractivo para los dueños de las salas cinematográficas.

Marenzi explicó: "MGM evaluará las oportunidades del modelo 'Día y Fecha' mercado por mercado. La

experimentación continúa en los Estados Unidos y en unos pocos meses todos tendremos un mejor conocimiento acerca de este sistema. [Por ahora] no hay suficiente información. Algunos datos muestran que el modelo 'Día y Fecha' potencialmente puede estimular negocios adicionales, pero hay otros, que muestran que podría afectar negativamente algunos aspectos de nuestros negocios."

Teniendo como objetivo final la entrega de películas vía Banda Ancha en el modelo "Puerta-a-puerta", la Alianza de Productores de cine y Televisión con base en Hollywood (Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers) ha declarado lo que ha sido llamado el "Jihad" en contra de la Unión de Guionistas de America (Writers Guild of America) para la eliminación del pago llamado "residual," una práctica iniciada en 1935 cuando las estaciones de radio comenzaron a utilizar grabaciones para ser emitidas en distintos horarios y pagaban a los artistas una porción de lo que hubieran recibido si el actor hubiera tenido que transmitir en vivo para diferentes zonas horarias. Fue en 1950 cuando la televisión tomó prestado de la radio esta estructura de pago residual, que luego fue aplicado a las repeticiones de programas y a las licencias de derechos internacionales. Hoy, el campo de batalla por los pagos residuales afecta la Internet o la Venta Directa por la Web, ya que en esta área, los Estudios pueden aducir estar en desventaja. En el futuro inmediato, sin embargo, la eliminación o reducción de los derechos residuales en la Internet y servicios digitales, se volverán tan buenos como el oro, ya que los Estudios finalmente sacarán ventajas de todos los aspectos de la tecnología digital y del transporte por Banda Ancha.

Luego de esta revisión, uno puede imaginarse, cerca del 2010, cómo los estudios harán uso de la tecnología digital y de la Banda Ancha para todo el proceso de producción, promoción y distribución de sus películas: Escenas filmadas digitalmente serán enviadas por Banda Ancha a Post producción, acotando los tiempos y los costos de producción. Una vez terminadas, las películas serán promovidas utilizando formas "virales" de marketing, como ser los sitios Web y los Blogs (para ello han creado la palabra WOMMA — Word-Of-Mouth Marketing Association — algo así como la Asociación de Marketing del palabrerío) ahorrando lo que actualmente representa un 30 por ciento del presupuesto final de un film. Finalmente las películas serán distribuidas simultáneamente de manera directa a los hogares, a las salas cinematográficas y a todas las variantes de Video-on-Demand (Operador de Cable, IPTV, Teléfonos celulares y bajadas a computadoras).

Pero Marenzi se ocupó de menguar un entusiasmo excesivo. "Ahora es el inicio. [Pero] no es una corrida de 100 metros, es una maratón. Como dueños de los contenidos, no sentimos necesariamente la presión del tecnólogo." ●

Este artículo, del mismo autor, apareció originalmente en el insert sobre Cine de Il Sole 24 Ore, el diario financiero Italiano de mayor tirada en Europa.



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Problemas de Rating

(Continuación de la página 27)

plus three) y "Live plus siete" (live plus seven), son las variaciones de Nielsen Media Research para su producto de Ratings "Live", que toma en cuenta el playback del DVR.

Digamos, que en los usuales ratings semanales de 24 en FOX TV, la cadena obtiene un 10.2 rating de hogares en la emisión del lunes en su modelo "Live." Pero ocurre que algunos -entre los que se encuentra el autor de esta nota- graban en TiVo el programa y lo ven en otro momento de la semana. Reconociendo

este dato, Nielsen lo podría agregar en la cuenta semanal, lo que en teoría el rating podría pasar de 10.2 al de 10.7 si el 0.5 de los espectadores hubieran grabado el programa viéndolo mas tarde. Pero esto no sería tan bueno si vieran el programa el martes, Fox no recibe ningún punto extra por tal esfuerzo. De la misma manera, "Live plus el mismo día" permite sumar hasta pasado un día y "Live plus tres," la versión mas exaltada, representa obviamente la mas versión mas consensuada.

Wayne Friedman, Editor en la Costa Oeste de Media Post, cree que los Broadcasters van a tomar la versión de "Live plus el mismo día" (live plus same day), si pueden obtener mas del producto.

Pero es allí cuando comienza nuestra historia, y no cuando termina. Parece ser que nadie (léase: Agencias de publicidad) estaba satisfecho con (o por adquirir) el

"Live plus," sea cual fuera el modelo. El año pasado, "Live plus," virtualmente robó el show en el encuentro de los Upfront en Nueva York. Los Broadcasters en general deseaban ésta o alguna otra variante de la misma. Algunos, como Mike Shaw, Presidente de Ventas de ABC, que en particular insistió en que "Live plus siete" (live plus seven) sea parte de cualquier discusión sobre ventas que tuviera lugar en su cadena, al menos en los Upfront. Empero esto, a los anunciantes, no les gustó en absoluto.

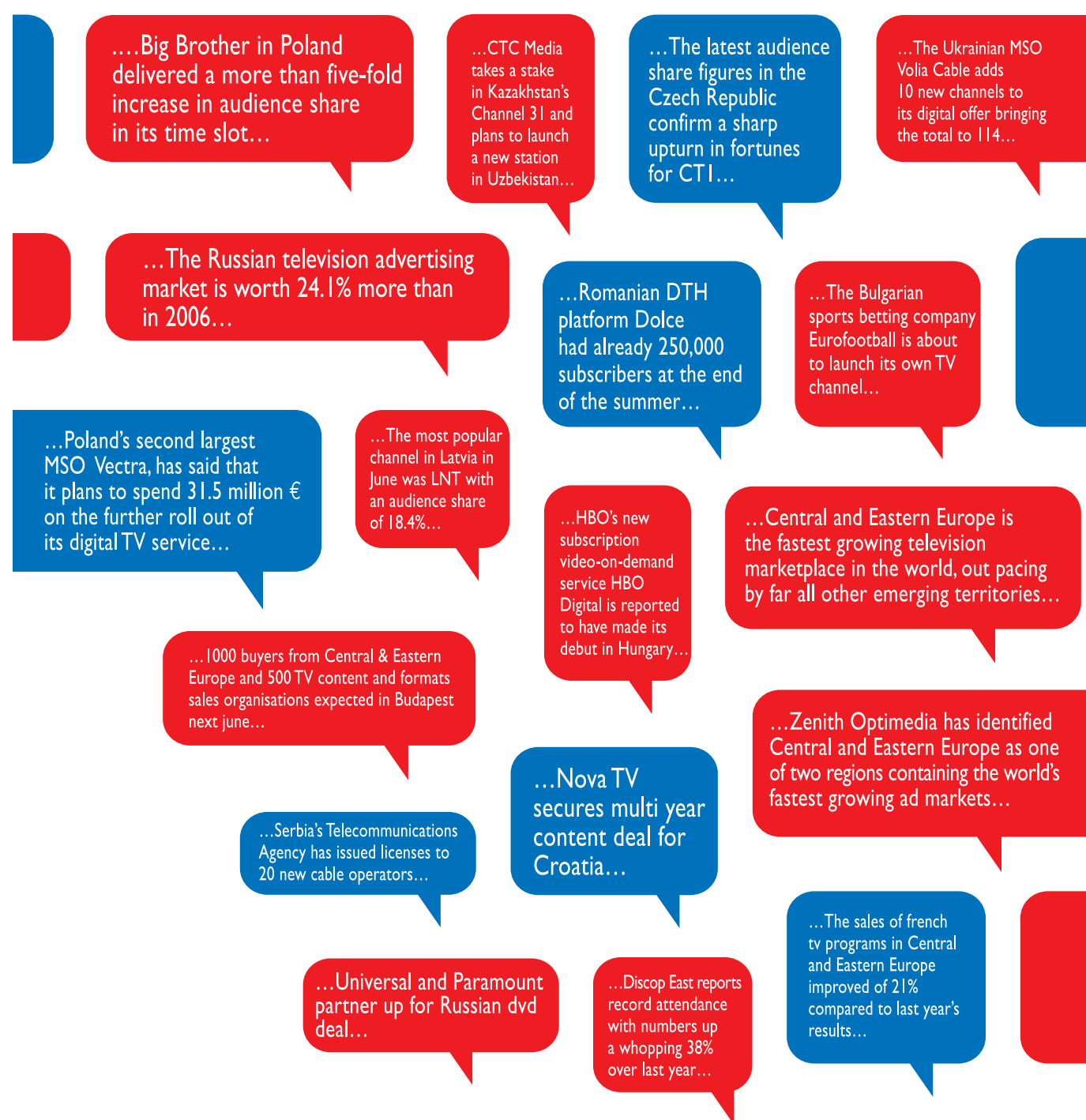
Ahora los anunciantes están promoviendo su propia iniciativa con Nielsen, que aparentemente es la que está ganando mas fuerza por el momento. En su esfera de influencias y en el Upfront de este año, los anunciantes pidieron por "Rating de comerciales minuto a minuto" ("commercial minute ratings"), para que

sea ese el valor de la medición según el cual ellos compran espacio publicitario. Esta es la otra cara del sistema Nielsen de medida de los comerciales, y es simplemente lo que el nombre sugiere, el rating para un minuto específico, en este caso, cuando el comercial de un cliente ha sido transmitido. Si, por ejemplo, hay un comercial de Apple Computer durante, digamos Héroes en NBC, y sale al aire a las 21:22 durante el programa, la agencia puede comprar el espacio para pautar exactamente de 21:22 a 21:23 de acuerdo al dato exacto del rating en vez de hacerlo durante el programa o en una rotación en particular durante el Prime time. Sin embargo, dada la información que pudimos recabar a esta altura de las negociaciones, los Broadcasters promueven la venta de un paquete publicitario focalizado, o un rating por spot, para que en realidad los que compran en Héroes puedan concentrarse -por ejemplo- en el espacio que va de 21:22 a 21:24:30.

La nueva medición promedio del "Minuto a minuto" es aparentemente el instrumento para los anunciantes, y ha sido ampliamente difundido que al menos en los dos últimos años, Starcom y el Grupo M, sugirieron que comprarían espacios de publicidad basándose en el promedio de los ratings minuto a minuto que son diferentes al rating de los programas. De hecho, el CEO de Starcom, John Muszynski, dijo en una conferencia que su compañía iba a "impulsar agresivamente el tema de los ratings de los comerciales," y que estaba considerando ir mucho mas allá que eso ya que su compañía examinaba un modelo de ratings "segundo-a-segundo" que aparentemente Nielsen estaba en condiciones de ofrecer. Rino Scanzoni, Gerente de inversiones del grupo M, dijo que se sentiría satisfecho con un promedio de rating para comerciales minuto a minuto para todo un show, presumiblemente para comprar dentro del show en lugar de hacerlo en un punto específico de corte en la tanda publicitaria.

Es interesante que Mike Shaw, que en el pasado dijo que no haría en el Upfront negocios con ninguna agencia que no tomara en cuenta la medición "Live plus siete" (live plus seven), está teniendo una actitud mucho mas amigable con las agencias, declarando que ABC TV hará negocios basados en la medición minuto a minuto.

Pero luego que todo ha sido dicho o hecho, ¿quién realmente estará sentado en la cima de todo esto? Viene al caso recordar la famosa historia de la Fiebre del oro en California. Los que más prosperaron no fueron justamente los mineros, sino los abastecedores de los mineros, los que vendían Levis, comida, palas, picos y mapas a todos los mineros atraídos por la fiebre del oro. Ahora los mineros son las Networks y los anunciantes. Los abastecedores de esta era son los Nielsen. Ellos siempre ganan. ●



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Broadband Challenges

(Continued from Cover)



ATVC's Walter Burzaco

In the view of Humberto García, general secretary of TEPAL, the Panama-based pan-regional TV association, “In Argentina, regulators will not allow Telcos to buy up cable TV companies and create monopolies or duopolies, as was the case in Mexico, Colombia and Brazil.”

Challenges in Argentina exist on the content side, as well. Last month, TV networks couldn't broadcast telenovelas or series due to a strike by the Asociación Argentina de Actores — the actors' union — against producers, represented by the Cámara Argentina de Productores Independientes de Televisión (CAPIT), and the broadcasters, grouped under the Asociación de Teleradiodifusoras Argentinas. The actors asked for an increase in salary and a shorter workday.

After a five-day strike, the actors accepted the proposal offered by the TV channels and production companies, which included a minimum salary of 6,300 pesos (U.S.\$2,000) per month. Despite the agreement, tension between the actors' union and the producers continued because CAPIT added the use of product placement (Publicidad No Tradicional) into the mix — despite the fact that the federal government has not yet approved this practice.

Uruguay: Offers Mobile TV

At present, Uruguay produces a small amount of local content. “There is little national production, and we buy a lot of canned content,” said María Fernanda López, programming director at Latinoamérica Televisión. She continued: “The TV stations are trying to change this situation, but the fact remains that buying content abroad requires a lower investment.”

In the pay-TV sector, consumer penetration is 56 percent (more than one million subscribers), and the use of

broadband is mostly limited to telephone service. Telcos are now in a great position to develop Triple Play, since the regulatory framework doesn't currently allow it to cable operators. But in order to be ready should the law change, the “Independent cable operators are now in the midst of digitizing their services,” said Horacio Rodríguez, an executive with the cable association, CUTA.

Last June, Uruguay's telephone operator, ANCEL, launched mobile TV over its G3 (third-generation) network. Although its cost is high at 800 Uruguayan pesos (U.S.\$36) per month per subscriber, the service was well received.

“We are the first operator in Uruguay offering mobile TV,” explained Jorge Suarez, marketing manager of ANCEL. “The offer is comprised of free local channels, as well as some international TV channels such as CNN Español, Cartoon Network and Bloomberg. We also offer premium content channels with high monthly costs, depending on what package users choose.”

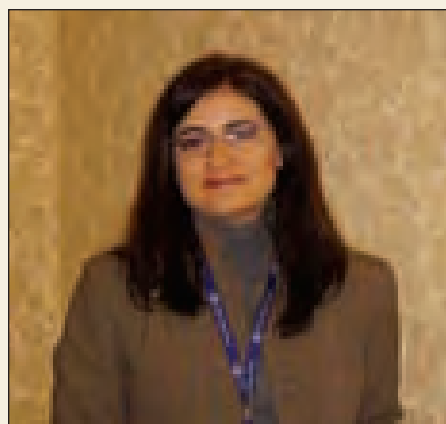
Chile: Duopolistic Pay-TV Market

Pay-TV came to Chile in 1980 and many companies began offering it. In 1990, pay-TV provider VTR started merging with other companies providing the service. By 2005, VTR controlled 80 percent of the market.

Similarly, after merging with its competitor, Metropolis Intercom SA, Telefonica soon became the second largest pay-TV provider in the country. Today, Telefonica offers combined packages of television, Internet and telephone.

The pay-TV service is 80 percent provided by cable television and broadband, with the remaining 20 percent by satellite. For cable and satellite, VTR's market share is 76 percent, followed by Telefonica, which continues to grow. For telephone service, Telefonica is dominant, with 70 percent penetration, while VTR reaches 12 percent (or 400,000 telephone homes) since it started offering Triple Play.

Chile has still not chosen a standard for digital terrestrial broadcasting, nevertheless, VTR offers high-definition



María Fernanda López, of Latinoamérica Televisión.

TV on a special digital channel.

By acquiring satellite company ZAP TV, Telmex, the Mexican telecommunications giant, entered the Chilean market with wireless Triple Play services, which included digital television, Internet broadband and telephony. With this purchase, Telmex positioned itself as a global pioneer, commercializing the wireless Triple Play sector.

Paraguay: High Piracy Rates

Paraguay is facing an economic recession that has slowed the growth of the TV industry. Today, cable television is considered a luxury. There are five free, over-the-air TV channels, and a single company provides Internet service.

Still, “People are looking for ways to access cable TV services without paying,” complained Solange Rasmusen of Video Cable Continental. He then explained: “It costs almost [U.S.\$40] per connection, plus a monthly subscription fee. [Unfortunately], piracy is very difficult to fight. The most one can do is take a photo of the house of the illegal subscriber and try to intimidate the pirate into paying. We need to create fear.”

Cable theft is high — for every legitimate subscriber there are four hackers. Explained Gabriel Carballo, general manager of Red Multicable: “The ideal is to offer Triple Play, but it is unlikely to happen until basic telephony remains in the hands of the state.”

Venezuela: Upgrading To “Triple Play”

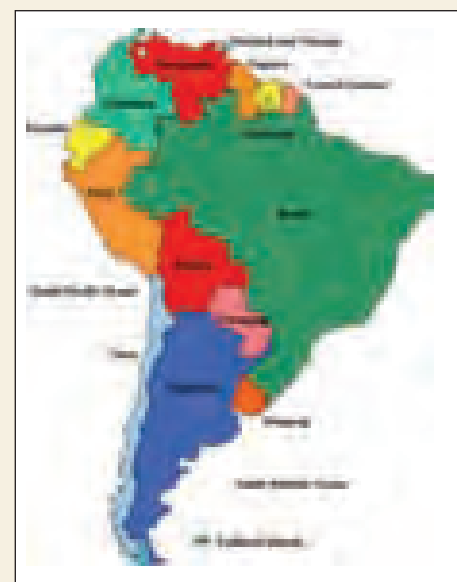
Stimulated by the income generated by high oil prices, Venezuela is in a period of uninterrupted consumer growth. Roberto Campos, executive vp of Intercable Venezuela, said that the future of cable in his country involves Triple Play packages similar to those offered by Chilean operators. “Our strategy is to compete by offering very low rates. We have to cater to the customer who buys three products, and we expect that with this service, customers will be more loyal.”

Bolivia: Still Without Satellite Television

Cable TV came to Bolivia in the year 2000, and there are now seven operators (two of them also provide broadband Internet services). The country also has 60 free-to-air TV channels — but no satellite television. Cable operators offer between 80 and 90 TV channels for about U.S.\$20 per month.

Peru: Looking to Promote Convergence

In 2006, the number of broadband connections in Peru grew by 30 percent



as compared to 2005. The country has two major cable operators: Telmex, with 25,000 subscribers and Star Global with 12,000, plus DirecTV with 29,000. There are also independent cable companies, which, cumulatively, have 140,000 subscribers.

In June, Telmex acquired cable TV company Virtecom, which had 102,000 subscribers. Earlier, it had acquired Boga Communications, which controlled four percent of the market. Mauritius Escobedo, general manager of Telmex Peru, said that, “With these acquisitions we are entering into the delivery of digital services, offering voice, data, Internet and video.” The company also operates mobile phone company Claro (which has a 36.7 percent market share).

Colombia: The New Players

During the past year, Colombia experienced some intense pay-TV competition. In April, Telmex bought cable operators Colombia Cablecentro (with 325,000 subscribers) and Satelcaribe (which operates in 15 Colombian cities), both of which offered subscription television services and Internet access. In addition, Telmex acquired 100 percent of Ecuador-based Ecutel, a company that provides telecommunications services to customers in Colombia's corporate world.

For the development of digital cable and broadband television, Telmex and Telefonica are investing the equivalent of U.S.\$340 million between them, while Empresas Públicas de Medellín is investing \$13 million. It is expected that this year, the networks' digitalization will finally be completed, thus increasing the number of channels offered. Because Colombia allows free entry into local telephone markets, by 2011 more companies (both foreign and domestic) are expected to be providing cable TV. ●



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140 x 1/2 TV Hour
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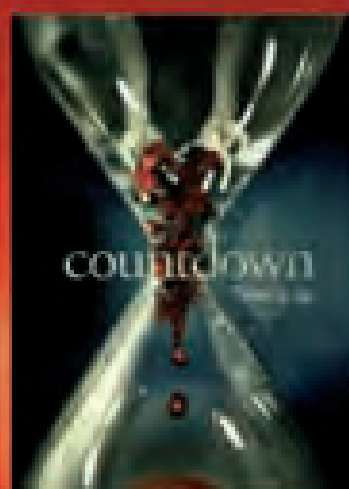
Bella and Benny hate each other because they are different, but afterwards a great love arrives.



SITCOM

120 x 1/2 TV Hour
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A reality show gave her another husband. Now she does not know which one to keep.



SERIES

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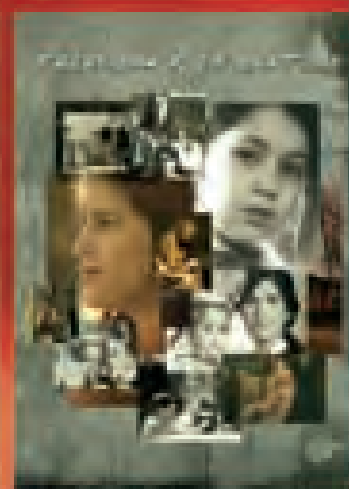
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Advertising

(Continued from Cover)

Traditionally, commercial breaks within programs were just that: breaks for viewers to roam around the TV dial or to simply grab a beer. Advertisers tried to make their spots entertaining or unusual, but for the most part, that wasn't enough to keep viewers from "zapping" (channel-hopping) or running to the toilet. And the advent of TiVo and the DVR certainly hasn't made things easier for ad men.

If technology has made life more difficult for advertisers and TV outlets

alike, by golly technology has to come to the rescue. And it has. Introducing: "triangulation," "advanced advertising" "buzz" and "commercial data." These new tools make sure today's advertisers get the full bang for their bucks.

Triangulation is the practice of combining television, the TV outlet's website and the advertiser's own website. It has been reported that viewer ad recall of a triangulated ad campaign is 50 percent higher than average.

Advanced advertising is offered when MSOs (cable operators) form a national network by linking with each other.

Buzz is a way to search the Internet to gather what people are saying about advertised products and how their messages are getting out.

Commercial data is Nielsen Media Research's latest ratings service and the one that is generating the most ink. Last

June, Nielsen released its long-awaited Commercial Minute data file, a ratings service that measures how many viewers watch spots rather than just the programs they run in.

The Average Commercial Minute data file is currently only available for national audience estimates. Monitor-Plus information is used to identify those minutes that contain commercial minutes. This latter Nielsen service has been around for a few years and tracks commercial activities and expenditures.

Nielsen's vp of Communications, Anne Kissel Elliot, explained that, "During the 2007 [U.S.] upfront season clients used the Average Commercial Minute data in negotiations and seemed to latch on to one particular stream of the data — C3, which translates as live viewing of commercials plus the incremental commercial viewing that takes place over three additional days of

playback with a DVR." From the broadcasters' perspective, advertisers are no longer buying "live" or "live-plus-seven," but "C3," which are ratings that tell advertisers how many people are watching commercials between the time the program airs to three days out — when that advertising is no longer considered timely.

In October, Nielsen formed a partnership with Google to provide viewer data for TV commercials. Earlier that year, in April, Google acquired a UHF network for the purpose of developing an effective way to measure commercial viewership. And even though "the details of the deal with Google are still being worked out," said Nielsen's Elliot, she described it as "enabling Google to offer demographic information that comes from Nielsen to those clients using their ad-buying service."

TiVo has also jumped on the commercial-measuring bandwagon. The company is capable of monitoring real time and time-shifted TV viewing on its DVRs from a panel of 20,000 users. However, TiVo data is not widely accepted because its sample isn't representative of TV households across the nation. On the other hand, while Nielsen monitors minute-by-minute commercial average ratings, TiVo measures things second-by-second.

All ad-monitoring services provide a way to calculate if there is a need for make-good ads when a show's ratings fall short of guaranteed viewership levels. The source for commercial minute audience estimates are based on the same National People Meter sample that is used to measure program ratings. The sample is currently approximately 14,500 households. Nielsen has been collecting commercial data from the full sample, including the 21.5 percent that have DVRs. However, explained Elliot, "Nielsen tracks viewing to all sources — linear television, traditional VCRs, DVDs and DVRs — that last of which is the one that is making the most news since it provides the simplest way to time-shift viewing. It is the time-shifting made possible by DVRs that has led clients to ask for such things as the Average Commercial Minute data file."

The cable industry, led by the Cable Television Advertising Bureau (CAB), first pressured Nielsen to delay an earlier rollout in an effort to have greater influence on the process. But last October, through CAB, the major U.S. cable networks announced that they would not participate in the plan to measure commercial viewership, after all.

According to Elliot, one of CAB's concerns was "the need to differentiate between national commercial minutes and local commercial minutes for cable systems. Prior to the introduction of the Average Commercial Minute data file this was less of an issue. Nielsen worked with cable networks and systems to develop new software to improve the ability to identify national commercial minutes. That was introduced early in 2007. One of the reasons that Nielsen delayed the launch of the Average Commercial Minute data file was so that this software could be completed." ●

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NATPE

(Continued from Cover)

Laing, CEO of Los Angeles-based Rigel Entertainment, which returned to the floor last year after a number of years in the suites. "So we'd rather be on the floor. We'd rather have a presence." And while he believes that "NATPE is not a place where you launch shows," the company is still bringing a host of movies, including the high-octane *Crazy Girls*, starring Nikki Ziering, and *Stuck*, a dark psychological thriller with *American Beauty*'s Mena Suvari

While Laing said he'd be happy to skip out on NATPE altogether, others, however, are more than willing to make the trip out to Sin City. "NATPE's a good market for us," said Brian Lacey, executive vice president, International, of New York-based 4Kids Entertainment. "It's not nearly as expensive as MIP or MIPCOM, and you're in and out in three days."

In recent years, Latin American



Alfred Haber, founder of Alfred Haber Distribution

business has become a big part of NATPE, and while that will be true for 4Kids, the company's also planning on doing business with key Canadian and European broadcasters. "Believe it or not," said Lacey, "but we have some meetings set up with broadcasters from Central Europe and other emerging markets."

Susan Bender, president and CEO of New York's Bender Media Services, a company that specializes in Latin American sales, is particularly excited about the market since she believes she has exactly what the Latins are looking for: green programming. She's coming to NATPE with *The Green Minute*, a lifestyle show highlighting new green products.

While Bender opted for a suite, saying

she "wanted to be where the Latin traffic will be," the U.K.'s Granada International chose the floor. "We upped our profile last year when we went back to the floor [after many years away]," said Tim Mutimer, Granada's director of Sales, mentioning that NATPE has become a vital annual event for his company. Added Flavio Medeiros, a senior Sales exec at Granada, "NATPE has always been a strong market for Latin American clients as many of them don't visit Europe that often. Also, the first quarter is when most Latin American channels lock their plans and start spending their annual budgets, so it's important that Granada be present at the market and start the year strong."

Sheila Hall Aguirre, who looks after Latin America for the U.K.'s FremantleMedia Enterprises, concurred, saying that not only is NATPE a crucial market for Latin America, but that she's so overwhelmed in Vegas that she often can't fit in all her appointments. "We're on the floor. I prefer it," she said. "You get more traffic." Despite her abiding affection for the convention floor, she does acknowledge that suites have their advantages too. "On the last day, people are literally tearing their booths down around you. In a suite, you don't have to worry about that."

Telemundo's Maria Alicia Parkerson, who operates out of the U.S. company's Spain office, said that NATPE's going to be big for her too. "It's the first market of the year, making it a great opportunity to showcase what's going on with us for the next 12 months," she said. In recent years, she mentioned, she's noticed a surge in the number of Asian buyers. In her opinion, "NATPE was in a slump, but it's coming back."

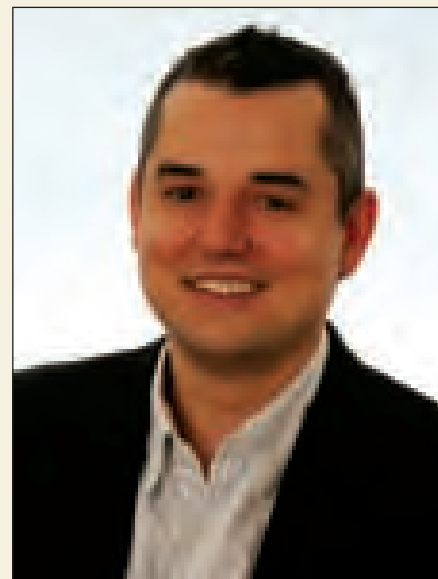
Takeshi Okajima, director of Licensing for Adness Entertainment, a Tokyo-based firm with offices in Los Angeles, said that while his company had a large booth last year, Adness wouldn't be exhibiting at this year's NATPE. "We've been doing a lot of business with the Latin American market lately, and we already have contacts at each station," he said. "Therefore, it isn't necessary for us to exhibit." In spite of this, Adness will be sending a few executives to Vegas just in case something unexpected should happen.

Alejandro Parra of Argentina's Telefe, was somewhat ambivalent: "We attend NATPE, but it isn't the best time of year for us to introduce new product," he said, explaining that the television season in Argentina starts in March or April. "But it's still a market," he added. "We will attend as usual."

Alternatively, Alfred Haber, founder of New Jersey-based Alfred Haber Distribution, Inc., said he's looking forward to this year's NATPE like never before. "NATPE is always a busy convention for us," he said. "I wish it were five days." The company is once again taking to the floor this year, and doesn't see the benefit of being in a suite. "I've seen the line for the elevators at the Venetian stretched to the Waldorf in

New York," he joked. "People eventually get fed up and make their way to down to the floor, to where we are."

When it comes to the floor vs. suites debate, there are two main elements to evaluate: Are the savings a company gets from taking a suite worth the frustration patrons experience while attempting to get to said suite? According to *Exhibitor Magazine*, an industry exhibition trade publication, the average total cost of exhibiting on any exhibition floor is three times the price of the rented space. Therefore, for a booth of 74 square meters, typical of a medium-size distributor, total cost to exhibit would be



Granada's Flavio Medeiros

U.S.\$60,000. (This takes into account that NATPE charges \$25 per square foot in order to exhibit on the floor, which reflects the U.S. average cost per square foot of \$24.64.) For this investment, according to *Exhibitor*, those who opt for stands on the floor are expected to devote \$130 per lead collected, to spend \$126 per participant that visits the stand and \$236 per participant that has a meeting with a staff member.

Conversely, exhibiting in a suite of comparable floor dimension (in this case two suites at Mandalay's THEhotel), costs are \$7,547 each for a mandatory five days, for a total of \$15,094. This represents a savings of about \$5,000 over the floor and \$30,000 overall. However, the cost per lead, per participant and per meeting is considerably higher, due to reduced traffic.

While many companies coming to NATPE have been debating the floor vs. suites question for years, a new issue that's arisen this year has to do with the Writer's Guild of America (WGA) strike, which has been raging in the U.S. since the fall. Craig Cegielski, Lionsgate's svp of Programming and Sales, said he's confident that Lionsgate's shows will fare well at NATPE since "we've already completed production of new seasons of series such as *Mad Men* and *Weeds*. We evaluated where we are in this writers' strike environment and found that it's business as usual for us."

Because of the strike (see story on page 44), more buyers are expected to attend

NATPE if only to meet with studios to learn what to expect come the L.A. Screenings in May. Buyers from English-language territories, who consume the U.S. TV season's content as soon as it emerges from the studios' lots, are particularly concerned as to the outcome of the WGA walk-out.

NATPE 2008 will feature a slew of panel discussions, keynote addresses, workshops and networking opportunities. Jeff Zucker, president and CEO of NBC Universal, will present NATPE's keynote address.

Last year's NATPE boasted about 8,000 attendees, including 133 international exhibitors, of which Latins made up a large majority. NATPE organizers expect similar numbers this year. "It's not a high-pressure market," said Rigel's Laing, noting that it's nice to start off the new year with an industry event. "The only question is whether people show up to see you there," he said. ●

NATPE has always been a strong market for Latin American clients as many of them don't visit Europe that often. Also, the first quarter is when most Latin American channels lock their plans and start spending their annual budgets, so it's important that Granada be present at the market and start the year strong.



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Hollywood Writers' Strike

(Continued from Cover)

of studios and networks, the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP). The writers' three-year contract expired on October 31, by which time committees from both sides had reached an impasse on several financial and strategic issues. At one point the negotiations were so acrimonious that they even argued about the site of the negotiations.

Prior to the October deadline, the union voted by a margin of 90.3 percent in favor of a walkout. "The writers do not want to strike," said WGA West president Patric M. Verrone, "but they are resolute and prepared to take strong, united action to defend our interests." And, this time, the financial stakes are so high that WGA members had been preparing for the eventuality of a strike since 2005.

The WGA's demands include increases in residuals for DVDs, VoD, IPTV and Internet downloads. Originally, the writers insisted that they get 2.5 percent of all gross "new media" revenue from the content they write. But ultimately, they amended this stipulation to a flat rate for fear of what the WGA called studios' "funny accounting." Their current proposal involves a doubling of DVD residuals, which would bring the rate up to eight cents per sale (a four cent increase) and equal compensation for content distributed over broadband. In addition to new media issues, the WGA insists that the AMPTP recognize writers from untraditional sectors of television, including reality programming, animation and basic cable, which are not currently represented by the Guild.

Many of these requests echo those of the last contract negotiations in 2001. At the time, however, residual concerns were compromised in order to obtain better health benefits, which was the union's priority. This time around the stakes are much higher in view of the fact that, eventually, all distribution will be via broadband. But although the new business models have not yet been defined, studios foresee broadband as a golden opportunity and VoD as a large moneymaker, and writers want to get in on the ground floor. In this respect, the Guild's John F. Bowman is quoted as saying: "I'm not going to be the chairman of the negotiating committee that gives away the Internet. There is an enormous burden of history here." Similarly, Jeffrey Immelt, CEO of GE, owner of both NBC TV network and Universal studios, has been quoted as saying that, "[It's] worth taking a strong stand on."

On the other hand, if VoD does not end up being a goldmine for the networks, they don't want to end up losing revenue to the writers. Conversely, the writers want to get in on the ground floor if VoD takes off like videocassettes and DVDs did.

The AMPTP faces further challenges because a favorable settlement with writers could trigger similar demands by

other unions such as the 120,000-member strong Screen Actors Guild and the Directors Guild of America (with 13,400 members), both of which have contracts expiring on June 30, 2008.

In his announcement of the strike to union members, WGA East president Michael Winship said of the AMPTP: "[They] are using fear and attempts at intimidation to maintain a status quo that makes no sense in a 21st century world of rapidly expanding global markets and new media."

While the WGA tags the struggle over new media residuals as the reason negotiations keep breaking down, for the AMPTP, "It's the desire of the WGA's organizers to increase their own power and prestige by expanding the jurisdiction of the union over reality television and animation writers." Indeed, the struggle is also for the union to acquire some clout and the studios to lessen the unions' power, starting with the WGA.

The WGA cannot afford to show weakness by caving on key issues as in the past, but a long strike could spell disaster for the industry. The 1988 strike, which was the longest in history, also dealt with residuals, which before the advent of the Internet, applied to syndication and videocassettes. Lasting a total of 22 weeks, it caused a shortage of material for

By the strike's fifth week, a total of 50 shows had already shut down.

The film industry also anticipated the strike with a flurry of activity this past summer. Talent agencies reported roughly 300 projects being pushed as "priority" by the studios. However, the effects of the strike on the film industry, where production schedules are much longer than in television, may not be apparent for several months.

A recent study by London, U.K.-based Global Media Intelligence reported that studios are paying out as much as 25 percent of a film's profits in residuals, which, in 2006, amounted to \$3 billion. Of that, writers received \$121 million, 55 percent of which went to their health and pension plans. On the other hand, a top actor or director can receive residuals ranging from \$20 million to \$70 million per film. The studios stand to pay the WGA \$130 million to \$151 million in residuals over the course of the new three-year contract, should they meet the writers' demands.

The consequences of the strike are not limited to American television. Networks all over the globe rely on American content. And in other English-speaking countries, the turnover period between the American and foreign TV premieres can be a matter of days. In Ireland, for

of pilots already stockpiled for the fall season," Horan said "But everyone knows that a pilot script needs a lot of work and bears no resemblance to what is shot." The strike could delay this process, resulting in fewer or under-developed products for international buyers. NATPE could potentially serve as a meeting point for international buyers to check in with the studios about the "strike-proof" shows they already have in the pipes and about their plan Bs should the strike continue into February — at which point the new U.S. TV season would be compromised.

Under this scenario, some international buyers are concerned that the L.A. Screenings might be postponed. This fear, however, has been dissipated by Warner Bros., which has already notified its international buyers of a May 19 start. Indeed, some TV executives feel that writers are not being idle during the strike and, once it is settled, they'll present the studios with a host of completed scripts. Curiously, key bargaining sessions were held at the Intercontinental in Century City, one of two hotels known as L.A. Screenings headquarters.

For the moment, the writers present a unified front, but the strike is easier on some than others. Unlike most labor unions, which represent members with incomes in the same general ballpark, the salary spread among the roughly 11,500 WGA members consists of millions of dollars. Working union members make anywhere from \$50,000 or less to \$5 million a year, and 48 percent of the WGA West is unemployed. In fact, the majority of the union is made up of young writers, about 7,500 of which were in high school or college during the 1988 strike. Head writers who pull in millions may not miss the paychecks, but for the union's many junior writers, the real struggle of the strike is making ends meet.

CBS reported that to reduce the financial strain, *Late Show* host David Letterman's independent production company, Worldwide Pants, Inc., picked up the tab during the strike. A few other talk show hosts adopted Letterman's largesse, but it is not the norm, and for many striking writers, times are lean.

Although a few personalities, like talk-show host Ellen DeGeneres, have crossed picket lines to resume their shows without union writers, industry-wide support may not last forever. The strike has also caused lots of resentment among the 15,000 below-the-line workers who lost jobs because of the strike. In addition, the Los Angeles economy is losing an estimated \$21 million per day, and by the sixth week, the networks had lost an estimated \$60 million in ad make-goods.

On the other hand, the AMPTP's members don't seem to be united. Some studios, especially those with networks, are more affected than others. For this reason, some are even suggesting that the studios negotiate individually with the WGA, or that collective negotiations be handled by a studio executive such as Fox's Peter Chernin. ●

This overview was written by Erin Somers, with contributions from VideoAge reporters in New York and Los Angeles.



Members of WGA East picket outside a studio in New York

television. Networks were forced to air reruns and the fall season was delayed. However, one reason the WGA eventually settled in '88 was because, at that time, AMPTP membership consisted of a large number of small producers, while, today, with media consolidation, the union is facing a handful of very large production companies.

The networks proved savvy this time around, going into production overdrive in an attempt to stockpile material as the contract expiration date moved closer. But the TV casualties began early nevertheless, with NBC's *The Tonight Show*, CBS's *The Late Show*, as well as Comedy Central's *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart and *The Colbert Report*, all going to reruns on the first day of the strike. Sitcoms fared a little better, holding out for a few episodes more each, with only NBC's *The Office* going dark early on. One-hour dramas have endured longest of all, but each week the number of completed episodes dwindles.

example, Radio Telefis Eireann (RTE) runs *Prison Break*, one of its highest rated series, only three days after its American airing. With fresh episodes on hiatus, RTE is now running movies in *Prison Break's* slot. "We have to do whatever it takes to cobble together a schedule," said RTE director of Broadcast and Acquisitions Dermot Horan, "Even if that means running movies and repeats."

The strike is even more detrimental to Canada, where U.S. programming is simulcast — broadcast at the same time that it airs in the U.S.

International networks are coping with the strike by carefully pacing their American programs. However, the biggest problem may arise when it comes time to buy new U.S. programs. RTE's Horan names a properly developed pilot season as the most important thing for both American networks and international buyers. "The networks claim to have a number

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My Two Cents

Let's talk about the future of NATPE. But before describing how it is envisioned, a "Frank" (rather than a "Joy") review of the current situation is in order.

NATPE's calendar year is viable, because it breaks a six-month stretch between MIPCOM and MIP-TV. The argument that there are too many trade shows, many believe, is not valid especially now that it is becoming unbearable to go through airports and to have to virtually undress before security guards. Particularly hard hit are those who travel through the London, England and Dallas, Texas airports, even though travel problems tend to be universal. For example, during a trip to New York from Rome, Italy last November, the Delta pilot "neglected" to refuel, so with the plane third in line to take off, it had to return to the gate, causing a three-hour delay and a myriad of missed connections.

As far as the market itself is concerned, NATPE remains especially viable for the Latin American TV sector. And until a European trade show such as Monte Carlo reappears on the horizon in early February, NATPE should retain its appeal for Europeans, as well. In addition, until the Santa Monica, California-based American Film Market (AFM) does an about-face and stops being concerned about losing face (the necessity of the industry is and should always be more important than management needs) and restores its original February dates (instead of its current October-November dates), the call for a winter market is very strong.

Indeed this call is so strong that the industry is even trying to carve a market out of the Berlin Film Festival — an event that goes against the elements themselves (i.e., it's cold!) and against the opinions of the nay-sayers who don't want a winter market.

Plus, the U.S. venue is ideal in the sense that the country should host at least three TV-related shows per year: NATPE in its current month of January, AFM returning to February, and the L.A. Screenings in May. I'd move the very important LICO's Licensing Show (but under different management) from New York City to Hong Kong or Singapore in early December, to combine it with a smaller TV programming market, such as the Asia TV Forum, which has failed to take off despite numerous attempts.

Several troublesome elements are, unfortunately, converging around NATPE. First, because of the changed U.S. television market — where domestic distributors can now make three calls to clear a new program for syndication — NATPE is no longer

viable for studios, which are the key domestic syndicators. Second, having lost the domestic "piggy-back," studios' international divisions find that NATPE is no longer efficient, considering that Latin American TV sales represent about eight percent of their overall revenues. Third, with domestic syndicated clearance sales gone, the market has lost appeal for Europeans and Asian TV buyers and, thus, for many distributors. Fourth, the Las Vegas venue is not highly desirable. It was only dictated by its proximity to Los Angeles in order to entice the U.S. studios. Fifth, the market is split between floor stands and hospitality suites, making it problematic for all concerned.

And, to top it all off, NATPE's valiant president, Rick Feldman, is entering into his second year of a three-year contract (after which he has indicated that he might retire).

Under this multitude of concurrent challenges NATPE has to find the strength to evolve. But there are several options:

Instead of trying to merge with the consumer association CES, negotiate a merger with the AFM and move to Santa Monica at the end of January. This will



"Are there any more stupid suggestions from the media?"

give a needed face-saving excuse to the AFM to bring the event to a more desirable calendar date, and give NATPE a new home.

Move it to Miami in January, since NATPE is now mostly a Latin TV event, and make it a hospitality suite-only trade show. The Miami venue is appealing to Europeans, as well, and the Hispanic TV market could be an added attraction.

Perhaps, in order to save money, instead of on the beach, the market could be held inland, in a place such as Coral Gables. Make NATPE a for-profit market organization, with investors putting money in it.

With added financial resources, the market could be an inviting, expenses-paid venue for major buyers.

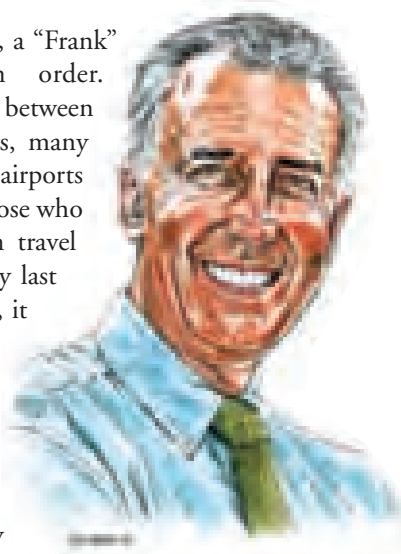
Restore the event as a content-only market, where broadcasters and electronic sell-through executives are buyers. Stage many receptions and luncheons with top-level keynote speakers.

Tie it in with the International Emmys. Eventually the board of this organization will get enough courage to give it a future.

Do not publish a market publication during the show, but encourage publishers to enter the market. The limited advertising resources available during NATPE aren't beneficial to the organization and discourage publishers from investing in the event.

Surely some readers will find fault with the above arguments and the subsequent remedies, but our experience has been that ignoring problems (even just perceived problems) or proposing solutions that are unrealistic, will only accelerate the untimely death of a market. As the expression goes: If one can't afford the solution, then it's not a solution.

Dom Serafini



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ILLUSTRATIONS

BOB SCHOCHET

FOUNDED IN 1981

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VIDEO AGE INTERNATIONAL (ISSN 0278-5013 USPS 601-230) IS PUBLISHED EIGHT TIMES A YEAR: JANUARY, FEBRUARY/MARCH, APRIL, MAY, JUNE/JULY, SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER/DECEMBER. PLUS DAILIES BY TV TRADE MEDIA, INC. SINGLE COPY U.S.\$9.75. YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION U.S.\$45 (U.S., CANADA, MEXICO); U.S.\$60 (U.K. AND EUROPE).

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